

Vision and Diabetes Information and quiz



In 2001 two percent of Inuit aged 15 and older were diagnosed with diabetes. By 2006 this number had doubled to four percent, which indicates that more and more Inuit are getting diabetes. It is a health issue that people might want to pay attention to now, to circulate information about prevention and awareness.

How does diabetes affect your vision?

When you have diabetes, your blood tends to contain a surplus of sugar. This sugar damages the inner walls of a part of your eye called the retina capillaries, tiny blood vessels. It causes buildup of fatty deposits in the capillaries and reduces the passage for blood. The risk of developing eye problems increases with the length of time you have diabetes. The risk is also increased when blood glucose levels are not well controlled over time by lifestyle and medication. Diabetics with existing eye problems face the risk of partial vision loss or total blindness.

What are the symptoms?

If you have one or more of these symptoms, you should go to the CLSC and talk with the nurse or the doctor to stop it from getting worse:

- ✓ Pain in your eyes
- ✓ Blurred vision
- ✓ Floating specks

- ✓ Blank spots in your vision
- ✓ Trouble seeing around the corners of your eyes

How can you look after your eyes?

To look after your eyes and help prevent vision loss:

- Have your eyes checked by the nurse, the doctor or the eye specialist to pick up early signs of damage.
- Control your blood glucose levels by adopting a healthy lifestyle and taking medication.
- Maintain a healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels by adopting a healthy lifestyle.

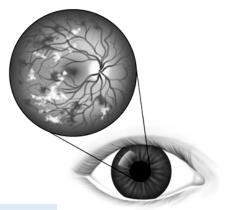
Is there treatment for your eyes?

If the damage is detected before it has affected your sight, treatment can prevent vision loss. Where vision loss has already occurred, treatment can only stop it from getting worse.

What are the types of eye problems associated with diabetes complications?

1. Diabetic Retinopathy

Of all the eye problems, diabetic retinopathy is the most serious. It occurs when your retina is damaged. The retina is a light-sensitive tissue at the back of your eye. It is nourished by tiny blood vessels. You get diabetic retinopathy when these blood vessels are damaged. Many people with diabetes have retinopathy.



Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of new cases of legal blindness among the working-age population.

2. Cataracts



If you have diabetes, your chances of getting a cataract are much higher than those who do not have diabetes. High blood sugar causes the lens of your eye to swell and the normally clear lens becomes foggy. Anyone can get cataracts but people with diabetes have eye problems earlier in life and the condition progresses more rapidly.

3. Glaucoma

Glaucoma is another type of eye problem among diabetics. Glaucoma results from excess fluid inside the eyes. The buildup of pressure damages the vessels and optic nerve and causes blindness. Diabetics get glaucoma 50% more often than people without diabetes.



Quiz: What you see with different eye problems?

Associate picture with the good condition

Α.



В.



C.



D.



E.



1. Retinopathy

2. Early blurred vision

3. Normal

4. Glaucoma

5. Cataracts

Answers: A2, B3, C5, D1, E4