

Have you had a dilated eye exam recently?

Important information for people with diabetes.

The American Diabetes Association recommends if you have diabetes that you have a dilated eye examination at least once a year.

Q *What is a dilated eye exam?*

A An optometrist or an ophthalmologist puts drops in your eyes to enlarge your pupils so they can see the inside of your eyes to check for signs of eye disease.

Q *What kind of eye disease can diabetes cause?*

A Diabetes can cause diabetic retinopathy and increases the risk for glaucoma and cataracts.

Q *What is diabetic retinopathy?*

A With diabetic retinopathy there is damage to the small blood vessels in the retina of the eye which can lead to permanent loss of vision or blindness if left untreated.

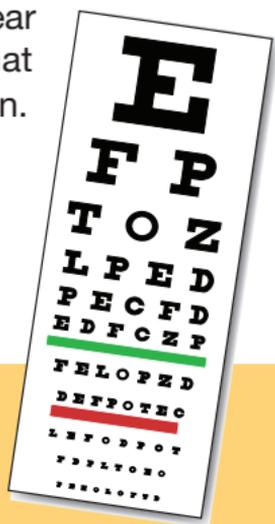
Q *What is glaucoma? What is a cataract?*

A Both of these affect many people who do not have diabetes. However, people with diabetes are twice as likely to get glaucoma or cataracts. Glaucoma is an increase in fluid pressure inside the eye that may lead to optic nerve damage, and a cataract is the clouding of the eye's lens. Both of these can lead to loss of vision.

Q *What can you do to avoid eye problems?*

A Keep your blood sugar and blood pressure under good control, quit smoking, if you smoke, and see your eye care professional at least once a year for a dilated eye exam and anytime that you experience changes in your vision.

Early detection and treatment can help slow eye disease!



Remember, only a dilated eye exam can detect signs of eye disease such as diabetic retinopathy. And it's covered for Harvard Pilgrim members.

For a list of eye care specialists in your area call member services at 888-333-4742, or visit www.harvardpilgrim.org.



Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare