

Seeing the Light on Diabetes and the Eye

[Diabetes](#) doesn't only affect your blood sugar levels – it can also have an impact on other areas of your body. Over 9 million people suffer from **diabetic eye disease**. This is a condition that occurs when high blood sugar levels damage the blood vessels in the back of your eye. You do not need to be one them!

Staying on top of the health of your eyes is important when dealing with diabetes. This includes getting routine eye exams. You may be wondering, “**Does my insurance cover diabetic eye exams?**”

Does Insurance Cover Diabetic Eye Exams?

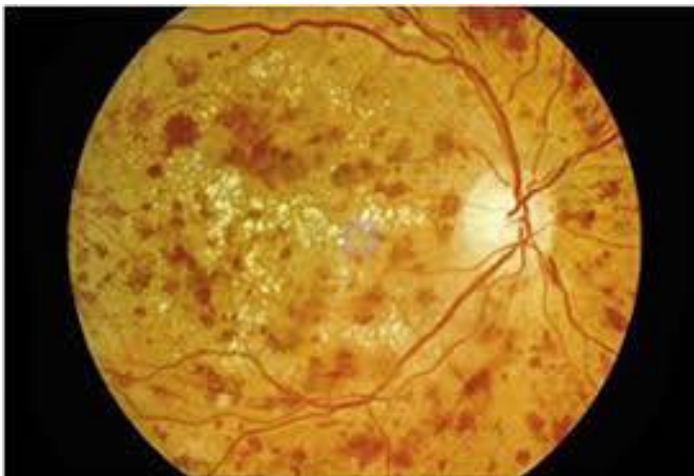
Almost all insurers cover eye exams if you have diabetes. Medicare generally doesn't cover routine vision services, such as eyeglasses and exams. **However**, Medicare Part B DOES pay for certain tests related to diabetes. ***Medicare Part B will help pay for a yearly diabetic eye exam if you have diabetes.***

Your Part B plan will cover one exam per year if you have diabetes. The exam needs to be performed by an eye doctor. Your PCP can refer you.

Understanding Diabetic Eye Exams

Diabetic retinopathy happens when ***the blood vessels inside your eye begin to leak fluid and blood into the retina***. This can cause:

- Permanent vision loss
- Damage to the retina
- This is a picture of a damaged eye:



This is what you see (and don't see) when you develop diabetic eye disease:



Early treatment and detection are essential to preserving your eyesight. A diabetic eye exam tends to follow the same pattern as a routine eye exam. However, your eye doctor will focus on the health of the blood vessels in your eyes and your “retina” (the back of the eye) during the appointment.

Dilating the Pupils

Pupil dilation is key to getting a clear view of the inner structure of your eye. The main areas your eye doctor will examine include your:

- Optic nerve
- Retina
- Blood vessels

Glaucoma Test

Detecting glaucoma early on is crucial for treating this disease that threatens your eyesight. The unfortunate thing about glaucoma is that it usually doesn't show symptoms until the patient starts to experience permanent vision loss.

Your eye doctor will need to monitor changes in the pressure within your eyes. Increased pressure may mean that you're [dealing with glaucoma](#).

Eye doctors also test for glaucoma by releasing a puff of air into your eye. The puff of air calculates your eye's inner pressure by how it responds to the air.

Vision Test

The vision portion of your diabetic eye exam is key to measuring your vision clarity.

Your eye doctor will ask you to identify small and large letters on an eye chart. They'll review each eye separately to identify any discrepancies between the eyes.

When to Schedule Your Diabetic Eye Exams

It's important to know when you should start scheduling diabetic eye exams once you've been diagnosed.

You should schedule your eye exam immediately if you've been diagnosed with any type of diabetes. Detecting retinal damage is crucial.

Pregnant women with diabetes should schedule an eye exam within the first three months of their pregnancy. They should also schedule a follow-up one year after giving birth.

We recommend scheduling annual eye exams for continual monitoring of your eye health.

Call us to get a referral for your eye exam! Your vision is "clearly" important!!