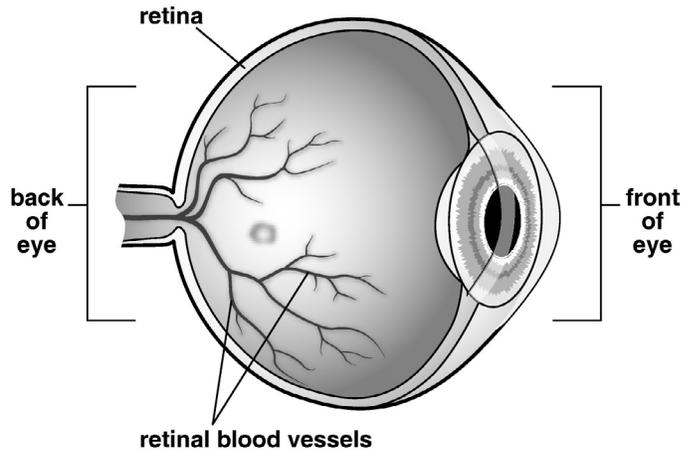


Diabetic Retinopathy

Diabetic retinopathy is an eye problem that can cause blindness. It occurs when high blood sugar damages small blood vessels in the back of the eye, called the retina. All people with diabetes are at risk for this problem. There are things you can do to reduce your risk and prevent or slow vision loss.

Diabetic retinopathy can affect both eyes. You may not have any signs at first. As it worsens, blood vessels weaken and leak blood and fluid. As new blood vessels grow they also leak blood and fluid. This causes blocks in your vision.



Signs of diabetic retinopathy

- Floating spots in your vision
- Blurred vision
- Blocked or hazy vision

Your care

To help reduce your risk of vision loss:

- Keep your blood sugar levels well controlled. This is one of the best ways to protect your vision. Work with your doctor, nurse and dietitian.
- Keep your blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels normal. You may need to take medicine.
- Have an eye exam each year by an eye specialist that includes eye dilation. An eye exam can detect early changes before you have any signs.
- Call your doctor if you have any changes in your vision.

There is no cure for diabetic retinopathy, but laser treatment or surgery may be done to prevent or slow vision loss.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.