

Diabetic Retinopathy Risk Quiz—Answers

The answers to this quiz are combined according to the questions (Example: questions 1 and 2 are answered as 1-2, etc.) Each question you answer with a “yes” increases your risk of developing diabetic eye disease.

- 1-2. Blurry vision may be a sign that you are suffering from diabetes. It's important that you see your eye doctor as soon as possible for a comprehensive eye exam that includes dilating the pupils. This allows the eye doctor to check your eye's blood vessels for unusual changes. If your eye doctor notices changes caused by diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma, he/she can suggest treatments to save your sight.
- 3-4. The longer you have diabetes, the greater the chances you will develop diabetic eye disease. That's why Prevent Blindness America recommends that people with insulin-dependent diabetes should be examined annually for diabetic retinopathy starting five years after the onset of diabetes (but generally not before puberty.) People with noninsulin-dependent diabetes should see their eye doctor soon after being diagnosed. You may have diabetes a long time without even knowing it.
- 5-6. High blood pressure and poor control of blood sugar levels can increase your risk of blindness. Both are linked to the development and progression of diabetic retinopathy or cataracts. Research is being done to find out if controlling blood sugar levels and blood pressure will prevent or stop the progression of diabetic eye disease. It's always vital that you keep your diabetes under control and follow your doctor's advice in treating your high blood pressure.
- 7-8. Race and family history seem to have a lot to do with who will get diabetes. People who are of Hispanic, African-American, Asian American, Pacific Islander and Native American descent are more likely to develop diabetes, especially if they are overweight. Talk to family members and find out if anyone in your family has diabetes and suffers from diabetic eye disease. At your next doctor's appointment, share your family's medical history.
- 9-10. Some studies have shown that people who exercise may prevent noninsulin-dependent diabetes. It's important that you talk to your doctor first if you plan to start an exercise program. Pregnant women with diabetes should see their eye doctor during pregnancy. Scientists are not certain why pregnancy seems to increase a woman's risk of developing and even accelerating diabetic retinopathy.