

## Retinal Screening (1 of 2)

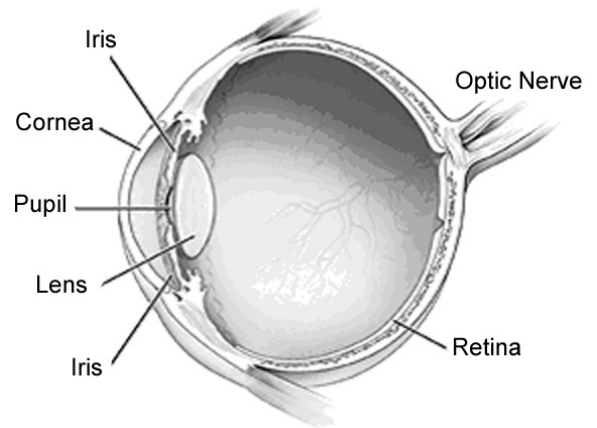
People with diabetes are more likely to develop eye problems that can lead to blindness.

Doctors cannot predict who will have eye problems and who will not, but the risk increases the longer you have had diabetes.

### Diabetic Retinopathy

The back of the eye is known as the retina. Like other parts of the body the retina needs blood to function adequately.

Diabetes can weaken the blood vessels of the retina leading to a condition known as diabetic retinopathy.



### Protecting your eyesight

Diabetic eye changes (retinopathy) can progress to a serious stage without affecting your sight. The best treatment for diabetic retinopathy is prevention by:

- Good control of blood sugar levels and blood pressure.
- Healthy eating and regular exercise.
- Annual eye screening with dilated pupils.

Without regular screening examinations you may not realise that you have a problem.

### Your screening appointment

When attending for diabetic eye screening, drops will be put in your eyes to dilate the pupils so the screener obtains a clear view. Photographs will then be taken of the back of your eyes.

The drops will sting at first. As the drops can cause blurred vision for up to 4 hours, you should not drive while your vision is blurred.

After the appointment your eyes may also be more sensitive to light, so

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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

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## ***Retinal Screening (2 of 2)***

on brighter days, sunglasses may be helpful.

### Treatment

If it is discovered that you do have serious eye problems then you will be referred to an ophthalmologist for further review and possible treatment.

The most common treatment for diabetic retinopathy is laser therapy. This involves shining a laser onto the back of the eye to remove the damaged blood vessels. Although uncomfortable it is not normally painful and is carried out as an outpatient appointment.

However, treatment cannot restore vision that has already been lost. That is why finding and treating diabetic retinopathy early is the best way to prevent vision loss.

**Diabetic eye changes can progress to a serious stage without affecting your sight. Without a regular screening examinations you may not realise that you have a problem.**

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