

EYE CARE

Can you imagine what it would be like if you were to lose your eyesight? How challenging even a simple daily task would be? Chionh Lay Keng, diabetes nurse educator, Diabetic Society of Singapore, shows you how to care for your precious eyes.

People with diabetes are 25 times more likely to become blind than those without diabetes. In fact, diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in adults age 20 to 74. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to complications of the body such as the heart, kidneys as well as the eyes.

High glucose levels in the blood vessels for a long time increase the risk of diabetes eye related problems. This may lead to damage of the walls of the small blood vessels in the eye, causing the lens of the eye to swell which will then affect our ability to see.

To correct this kind of eye problem, you will need to get your blood sugar back into the target range (90-130 milligrams per deciliter or mg/dL before meals, and less than 180 mg/dL one to two hours after a meal). It may take up to three months after your blood sugar is under control for your vision to return to normal.

Here are some steps to take good care of your eyes:

1. Keep your blood glucose levels, HbA1c, cholesterol and blood pressure well-controlled.
2. Quit smoking.
3. Take your medications regularly.
4. Control your diet as directed by your dietitian and physician.
5. Do your yearly diabetic retina photography check.
6. Ask your eye care professional to check for signs of cataracts and glaucoma. Identifying eye problems early and getting immediate treatment will help prevent more serious problems later in life.
7. If you are planning to get pregnant, ask your doctor for an eye examination.



Have you done your annual dilated eye examination? You can book an appointment at any of the following diabetes education and care centres:

- 1. DSS HQ @ Bedok**
Blk 141 Bedok Reservoir Road
#01-1529 Singapore 470141
Tel: (65) 6842 3382
- 2. Hong Kah Diabetes Education & Care Centre**
Blk 528 Jurong West St 52
#01-353 Singapore 640528
Tel: (65) 6564 9818
- 3. Central Singapore Diabetes Education & Care Centre**
Blk 22 Boon Keng Road
#01-15 Singapore 330022
Tel: (65) 6398 0282

References:

1. <http://www.medicinenet.com>
2. <http://diabetes.webmd.com>
3. <http://www.diabetes.org>