

Diabetic Retinopathy



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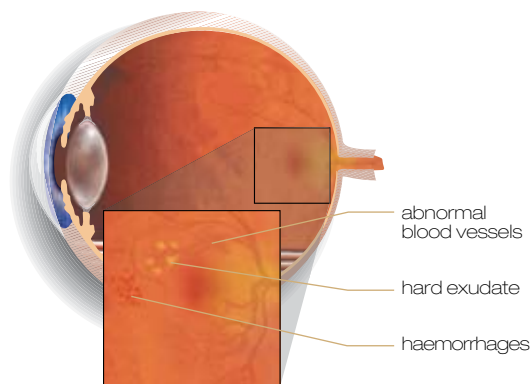
Diabetic eye disease

Patients with diabetes are at risk of developing certain disorders that can affect the eye. These include cataract, diabetic retinopathy and problems involving the optic nerve.

A common manifestation of diabetes in the eye is diabetic retinopathy.

What is diabetic retinopathy?

Diabetic retinopathy is primarily a disorder of the retinal blood vessels. The retina is the light sensitive membrane in your eye that enables vision. Damage to the retinal blood vessels can cause vision loss or even blindness.



Diabetic retinopathy

Diabetic retinopathy

In diabetes the blood sugar levels are too high. This causes the cells that line the blood vessels to swell and become damaged. As a result, the blood vessels may leak fluid or bleed into the retina and this can cause a significant vision loss. As the blood vessels become increasingly damaged with poor blood sugar control, they can become completely obstructed, depleting the retina of blood and nutrients. Abnormal new blood vessels may then grow, and possibly bleed into the cavity of the eye, causing a more severe vision loss.



Who gets it?

All people with diabetes are at risk of eye disease. In younger people with diabetes the onset can be rapid, whereas in older people it may come on more slowly. After ten years of the disease most people with diabetes will have some degree of retinopathy but this is not usually sight threatening.

What are the signs or symptoms?

Some common symptoms of diabetic retinopathy are:

- Blurred vision
(often linked to blood sugar levels)
- Floaters and flashes
- Sudden loss of vision.



Normal vision



Vision with moderate diabetic retinopathy

Can it be prevented?

Good control of the blood sugars will reduce the risk of retinopathy and control of hypertension is also important. Smoking increases the risk of serious eye disease. Regular eye checks including a retinal examination is by far the most important preventive measure for avoiding diabetic vision loss. Close monitoring of your diabetes by your family doctor is also imperative. Special care needs to be taken by diabetic patients who are pregnant.

Can it be treated?

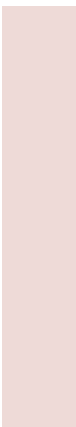
Diabetic patients who have retinopathy laser or other treatments often do not develop visual loss. We recommend treatment is started as early as possible to give the best outcome. It is very



important to have regular retinal examinations so that any abnormality can be detected and treated appropriately.

Sometimes retinal surgery is required for diabetic eye disease but only for advanced cases and when severe visual loss has occurred.

For more information on diabetic retinopathy please contact our friendly specialist team.



Auckland Eye

life-changing ophthalmic care

New Zealand's largest and most highly specialised Eye Centre offers:

- the best quality care as each ophthalmologist has international and specialist training in specific eye diseases and surgery techniques
- modern day stay facilities for cataract and outpatient ophthalmic surgery
- state-of-the-art laser surgery for refractive errors
- appointments throughout the Auckland and Northland regions

Auckland Eye is dedicated to providing the highest quality service in a caring environment.

From our surgical team through to front desk staff we place your requirements and comfort first. Auckland Eye is the only private sector eye centre in Auckland that has **Quality Health New Zealand** accreditation (QHNZ), for quality of patient care.

Centrally located in Remuera, near Newmarket, our main clinical and surgical facilities provide easy motorway access, off street parking and wheelchair access. Our expanding coverage includes dedicated facilities at the Apollo Clinic in Albany and surgical facilities at Shore Surgical in Milford. In addition to these we provide appointments at a wide range of locations throughout Auckland and north to Whangarei (see our website for locations).

Auckland Eye is an affiliated provider to **Southern Cross Healthcare Society.**



Affiliated Provider to



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FRANZCO

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- Botany



Dr David Pendergrast
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- Papakura
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BSc, FRANZCO

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