



# Diabetes: Be Your Teen's Vision Hero!

**If your teen has diabetes, it's important they have an annual eye exam!**

## When should your teen have their first annual dilated eye exam?

Eye disease may develop after living with diabetes for several years, especially in Black and Hispanic populations.

**TYPE 1:**  
3 to 5 years after diagnosis<sup>1,2</sup>

**TYPE 2:**  
at diagnosis or soon after<sup>1,2</sup>

Then every year or as recommended by the eye doctor.



## What is a dilated eye exam?

Dilation of the eyes is done using eye drops to widen the opening on the front of your eye, called the pupil. This allows the eye doctor to see into the back of the eye.



## Make an eye exam appointment for your teen today!

It is important for parents of teens with diabetes to know eye disease is common with diabetes.



Unsure about how to find an eye doctor?  
[PreventBlindness.org/find-an-eye-doctor](http://PreventBlindness.org/find-an-eye-doctor)

## Talk to your teen about vision symptoms to keep an eye on

In the early stages of eye disease, your teen with diabetes may not experience vision symptoms.

Their eye doctor may be able to detect early signs of eye problems during an eye exam.



**Sudden increase in eye floaters**



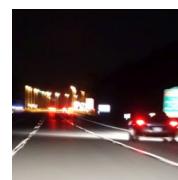
**Sudden missing or dark areas in your vision**



**Blurred vision**



**Flashes of lights**



**Difficulty seeing at night**



**Colors appear faded**

# 5 Simple Ways to Protect Your Teen's Vision from Diabetes



**Schedule annual dilated eye exams**



**Stay on top of preventive care—especially blood glucose**



**Make movement fun**



**Make healthy meals as a family**



**Be a good role model—don't smoke**

## Talk to your teen

This can help smooth the transition from pediatric to adult health care. Let them share their ideas first and show your appreciation for their thoughts. Here are some examples:

When could you take the lead in managing your care?

If you have questions about your diabetes and eye care, who can you ask?



Do you think you know the steps to make an appointment?

When it comes to your diabetes care, what would you like to learn?

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### References:

1. Preferred Practice Pattern Retina/Vitreous Committee et al (2025). American Academy of Ophthalmology Diabetic Retinopathy Preferred Practice Pattern®. Ophthalmology, Volume 132, Issue 4, P75 - P162. [https://www.aaojournal.org/article/S0161-6420\(24\)00784-X/fulltext](https://www.aaojournal.org/article/S0161-6420(24)00784-X/fulltext).
2. American Diabetes Association Professional Practice Committee (2025). 14. Children and Adolescents: Standards of Care in Diabetes—2026. Diabetes Care 2026;49(Supplement\_1):S297–S320. <https://doi.org/10.2337/dc26-S014>.

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