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# May is Healthy Vision Month...Did you Know?

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- There are currently more than 37 million American adults living with diabetes. Almost three times that many adults (96 million) are living with prediabetes<sup>1</sup> and 90% don't know they have it<sup>2</sup>.
- Anyone with diabetes is at risk for diabetes-related eye diseases such as diabetic retinopathy, macular edema, glaucoma, and cataracts<sup>3</sup>.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness in adults aged 18–64 years<sup>1</sup>.
- Diabetic retinopathy is the most common diabetic eye disease and a leading cause of blindness in American adults. The number of individuals with diabetic retinopathy is predicted to increase by nearly 50% (it's actually 47.7%) to over 11 million people by 2030<sup>4</sup>.
  - Inequity: Those who are at a higher risk of losing their vision or going blind from diabetes includes African Americans, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Hispanics/Latinos, and older adults<sup>5</sup>.
- In early stages, diabetic retinopathy may not have any obvious signs or symptoms, but finding it early can help protect your vision, making an annual dilated eye exam essential for those living with diabetes<sup>6</sup>.
- Some, including racial and ethnic minorities, are disproportionately affected by diabetes<sup>7</sup>.
  - While genetic factors likely play a role, so do social, economic, and environmental barriers<sup>5,8,9</sup>.
  - Black American adults are 60% more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes<sup>10</sup>.
  - More than 800,000 Black Americans have diabetic retinopathy that can lead to blindness<sup>11</sup>.
  - Native Americans (American Indians and Alaska Natives) are more likely to have type 2 diabetes than any other U.S. racial group<sup>12</sup>.
  - 3 million Hispanics/Latinos at risk of losing their sight in 2030 as a result of complications from diabetes<sup>13</sup>.
  - Hispanics and Latinos are less likely to<sup>14</sup>:
    - Have had an eye exam, making them less likely to be diagnosed and treated for eye conditions that can lead to vision loss
    - Have access to health and eye care services due to language barriers and/or health insurance coverage



- If you have ever found it difficult to prioritize managing your diabetes or to find the care and support you need, the American Diabetes Association® (ADA) can help.
  - Visit the ADA's Community Connection page to find diabetes resources in your area, including financial assistance, medical care, housing assistance, and more.
- One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to detect and manage disease and economic burden is through an annual dilated and comprehensive eye exam<sup>15</sup>.
- Take the 60-Second Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test to learn your risk factors and get information to share with your care team.
- Use the free RetinaRisk™ calculator today to help determine your risk for developing diabetic retinopathy.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/data/statistics-report/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/diabetes-prediabetes.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/diabetic-eye-disease#who>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/outreach-campaigns-and-resources/eye-health-data-and-statistics/diabetic-retinopathy-data-and-statistics/diabetic-retinopathy-tables>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/diabetic-eye-disease>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/diabetic-retinopathy>

<sup>7</sup> FDA. (2020, April 10). Fighting Diabetes' Deadly Impact on Minorities. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Retrieved from <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/fighting-diabetes-deadly-impact-minorities>

<sup>8</sup> American Diabetes Association. Health Equity Bill of Rights Fact Sheet. <https://www.diabetes.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/HEN%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>. Accessed April 5, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Social Determinants of Health: Know What Affects Health. <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/about.html>. Accessed April 5, 2022.

<sup>10</sup> *Diabetes and African Americans*. Diabetes and African Americans - The Office of Minority Health. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=18#:~:text=African%20American%20adults%20are%2060,compared%20to%20non%2DHispanic%20whites.>

<sup>11</sup> African Americans With Diabetes Can Prevent Vision Loss. (n.d.). Retrieved March 21, 2022, from <https://www.nei.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2019-06/african-americans-diabetes-can-prevent-vision-loss.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/disparities.html>

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.nei.nih.gov/sites/default/files/neh-pdfs/HL\\_DED\\_drop-in%20article\\_2014.pdf](https://www.nei.nih.gov/sites/default/files/neh-pdfs/HL_DED_drop-in%20article_2014.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/resources/features/hispanic-latino-vision-health.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/diabetes-vision-loss.html>



#### VISIONARY PARTNERS



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This article is for informational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.