Preventing and Controlling Diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas does not make enough insulin or when the body cannot use insulin properly. Insulin is a hormone that helps glucose from foods enter your cells to give them energy.

There are two main types of diabetes:

1. Type 1 diabetes: This is an autoimmune disease where the body’s immune system attacks and destroys the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. This type typically begins in childhood or adolescence and requires daily insulin injections or infusion to manage. It can be treated with medications and lifestyle changes as well.

2. Type 2 diabetes: This is the most common type of diabetes. It usually begins in adulthood and is commonly associated with obesity and a sedentary lifestyle. Type 2 diabetes can sometimes be managed through lifestyle changes like diet and exercise, but often requires medications to control blood sugar levels.

It’s important to note that gestational diabetes is a form of diabetes that occurs during pregnancy and typically resolves after the baby is born. However, women who have gestational diabetes are at higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

Diabetes can lead to serious health problems like heart disease, kidney disease, and nerve damage if left untreated. It is crucial to follow a healthy lifestyle and monitor your blood sugar levels regularly in order to prevent complications.

Helpful Tip: If you have diabetes or are at risk for developing it, talk to your healthcare provider about how to manage your condition and reduce the risk of complications.

About Your Retina Appointment

A retina exam is more extensive than a routine eye exam that you would receive from your general ophthalmologist or optometrist. Your initial visit may take anywhere from 2-4 hours, but will depend on what diagnostic tests your retina specialist deems necessary based on your clinical condition.

When your appointment begins, you will be asked about your complete medical history and also any medications you may be taking.

Next, your eyes will be examined, including a vision check, an eye pressure check, and external examination. Then you will receive your dilated retina exam to see the back of your eye (retina). Following your dilated retina exam, your doctor may perform diagnostic testing. Based on the diagnostic testing and exam, your retina specialist may be able to treat you in the office during the visit.

Common Conditions and Diseases Treated by Retina Specialists

- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)
- Macular Hole/Pucker
- Retinal Detachment

What to Bring to Your Appointment

- Your medical history (eg, hypertension, diabetes, stroke, etc.) and past surgeries
- Your family medical history
- Referring doctor’s name and contact information
- Referring doctor’s reason for referral
- Your complete list of medications

Find YOUR Retina Specialist at asrs.org/find-a-specialist
# My Retina Appointment

Being informed is key to maintaining good retina health. These are questions you may want to ask your retina specialist to better understand and care for your retinal condition.

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**AMD**

Do I have “wet” or “dry” macular degeneration?

What stage is my AMD — early, intermediate, or advanced?

Should I be taking vitamins or supplements to help with my retinal condition?

Diabetic Retinopathy

Can the progression of diabetic retinopathy be slowed?

What options are available to recover vision loss as a result of diabetic retinopathy?