

What Is a Dilated Eye Exam?

Diabetic macular edema (DME) can occur even before you notice any symptoms.

What You Should Expect

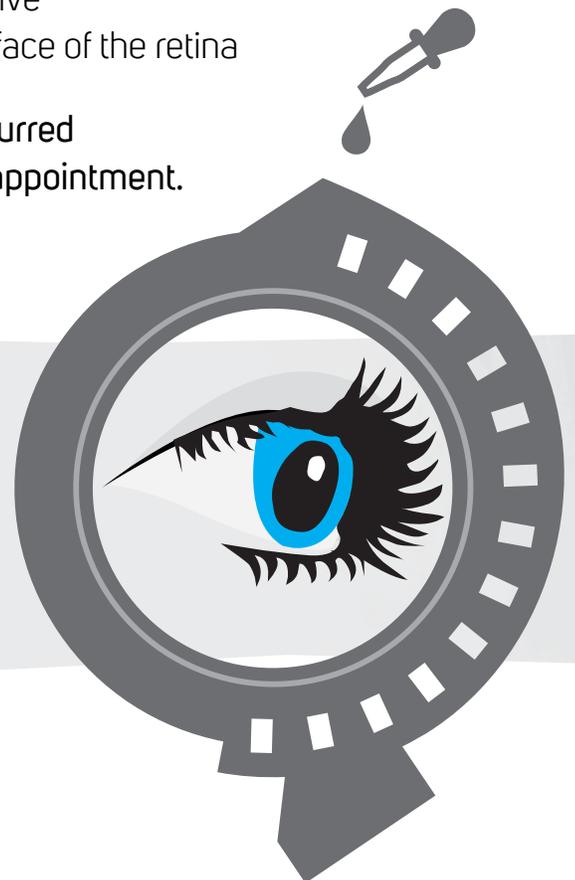
To perform a dilated eye exam, your doctor first puts drops into your eye to widen (dilate) the opening that controls the flow of light into the eye, called the pupil. He or she can then see into the back of the eye (including the retina, the light-sensitive tissue in the eye responsible for sight) for signs of problems. Specifically, your doctor will be looking for:

- Blocked blood vessels in the retina that prevent the retina from receiving a supply of blood and nutrients
- Damaged blood vessels leaking fluid into the macula, the part of the retina responsible for sharp central vision
- New, abnormal blood vessels (known as proliferative diabetic retinopathy) and/or scar tissue on the surface of the retina

After the exam, your close-up vision may remain blurred for several hours, so plan for a ride to and from the appointment.



If you have diabetes, you should get a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year.





**Early diagnosis and treatment are important.
Diabetic macular edema (DME) can cause
vision problems and even vision loss.**

If DME is suspected, your doctor may suggest a retinal photography test called fluorescein angiography before recommending treatment. In fluorescein angiography, dye is used to show the blood vessels in the back of the eye. This test can more closely see any damaged, closed, or leaking blood vessels.



**Photo from a
fluorescein angiogram**

If your eye doctor thinks you have DME, he or she may refer you to a retina specialist or general ophthalmologist. They are trained to diagnose and treat conditions like DME. Be sure to get a dilated eye exam at least once a year, and follow your eye care professional's advice.

Learn more at DiabetesSightRisk.com.

**For additional resources,
contact your case manager.**



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