

Who Are My Eye Doctors?

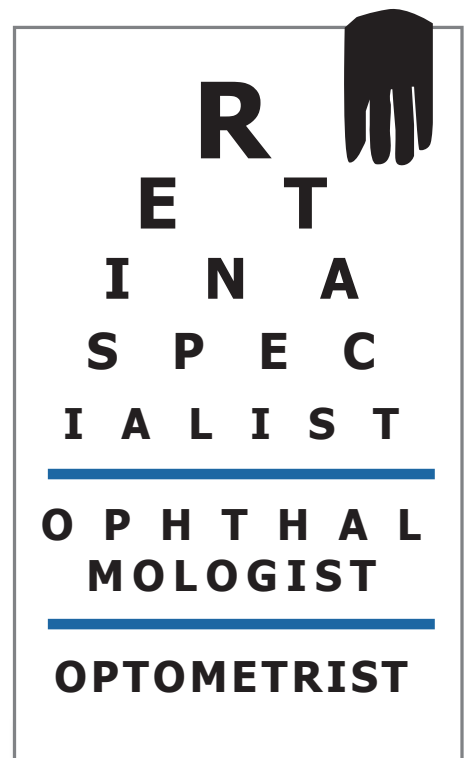
If you have diabetes, there are 3 types of eye doctors you may encounter in addition to your primary care physician and your endocrinologist.

Your Optometrist

Your optometrist does more than give you an eyeglass prescription. He or she is usually the first line of defense in helping to prevent eye problems.

However, they complete 3 years or more of college and 4 years of training, after which they receive a doctor of optometry (OD) degree. They may refer you to a retina specialist or general ophthalmologist if they see anything that isn't normal when they examine your eyes.

One of the tests they perform is the visual acuity test, which measures how well you can see letters on an eye chart from a distance. They also may perform a dilated eye exam to diagnose or monitor diabetic eye disease.



The General Ophthalmologist

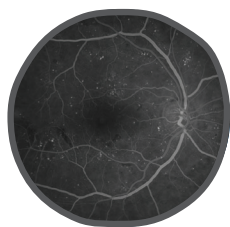
A general ophthalmologist is an MD who specializes in eye and vision care. As an MD, a general ophthalmologist is licensed to practice medicine and perform surgery. He or she has had at least 8 years of medical training, in addition to graduating from college. The general ophthalmologist can perform the same diagnostic tests as a retina specialist.

The Retina Specialist

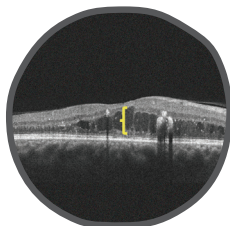
A retina specialist is an MD with a specialty in ophthalmology. He or she has also been trained in diseases and surgery of the vitreous and the retina. The vitreous is the clear gel that fills the space between the retina and the lens.

Retina specialists are highly trained MDs, with internships that take approximately 5 years. Then, they train for 3 more years as an ophthalmology resident. Finally, they add 1 or 2 years training in which they learn the medical and surgical care of retinal diseases.

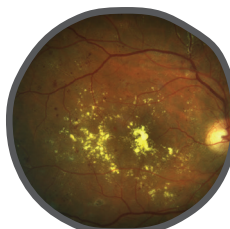
Some of the tests an eye doctor will perform include:



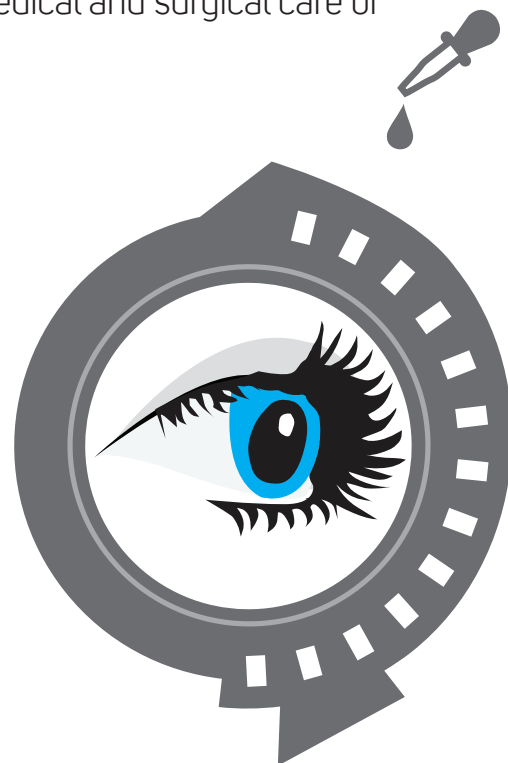
- **Fluorescein angiography:** A dye injected into your arm passes through your body's bloodstream to show the blood vessels in the back of the eye



- **Optical coherence tomography:** Imaging is used to show the layers and thickness of the retina



- **Fundus photography:** Shows the inside of the back of the eye



- **Dilated eye exam:** A retina specialist puts drops in your eye to dilate the pupil. He or she can then see into the back of the eye (including the retina) for signs of problems

General ophthalmologists and retina specialists are an important resource to help manage diabetic macular edema (DME) because they are trained to diagnose and treat retinal conditions like DME.

Learn more at DiabetesSightRisk.com.