Diabetic RetinaScreen
The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme

HSE

About Screening for Diabetic Eye Disease



This is a Plain English information leaflet about the Diabetic RetinaScreen programme

What is Diabetic Eye Disease?

Diabetes is an illness that some people have.
When you have diabetes, your blood sugar level can get too high.

Some people with diabetes can get diabetic eye disease.

This affects the small blood vessels at the back of the eye, in a part called the retina.

A healthy retina is needed for good eyesight.

What causes Diabetic Eye Disease?

You are at risk of getting diabetic eye disease if you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes.

The longer you have had diabetes, the more likely you are to get diabetic eye disease.

What is Diabetic RetinaScreen?

Diabetic RetinaScreen is one of the screening programmes in Ireland. Screening is a way to stop diseases or find them early so people can get the best treatment.

Diabetic RetinaScreen offers eye screening to people aged 12 and over who have diabetes.

The Government pays for this health service.
You do not have to pay to use the service. It is free.

How do you screen for Diabetic Eye Disease?

Screening uses special photographs to look for changes in your eyes.

These changes could affect your eyesight.

Regular eye screening can find diabetic eye disease before you notice any changes to your eyesight.

No screening test is perfect.
There are good and bad parts to all screening programmes.

Why is this screening important?

Screening for diabetic eye disease is an important part of diabetes care.

We want to find diabetic eye disease as early as we can.

If we find changes early enough, we can treat and manage them.

This helps to keep your eyes healthy.

If we do not treat these changes, you may get problems with your eyesight, for example, blurred vision.

However, this screening might not spot other eye problems.
You still need to have your regular eye test, for example, if you wear glasses or lenses.

How do I get a screening appointment?

You must register with Diabetic RetinaScreen to get your eye screening appointment.
If you register, it means you sign up for an appointment.

There are two ways to register with the programme:

1. You can self-register. This means you sign up yourself.

2. Your doctor or eye consultant can refer you. This means they send your information to Diabetic RetinaScreen.

How do I self-register?

You can self-register at

https://www2.

hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/

diabetic-retina-screening/register.html

You can use this QR code to get to the website.

Fill in the form online.

Print the form and get your doctor to check and sign it for you.

Post the signed form to us:

Diabetic RetinaScreen, FreePost,

PO Box 328, North City DSU, Cork.

We will register you and send you a screening appointment.

What happens if my doctor refers me?

Your doctor, eye consultant, or healthcare professional can refer you for screening for diabetic eye disease.

You will get a letter with your appointment details.

Giving Consent

You will be asked to give consent to have eye drops at your screening test appointment.

Getting your results

We will send you and your doctor a letter with your test results within 3 weeks.
Results tell you what your eye test has shown.

This letter will say what happens next.

Most people will have a normal test result:

- no changes to their eyes that need to be followed up, or
- early changes that will be watched.

If you get a normal test result, we will invite you for your next screening appointment in 1 or 2 years.

How can I cut down my risk of getting Diabetic Eye Disease?

- Control your blood sugar
- Control your blood pressure
- Take your medicine and tablets as your doctor tells you
- Go to your free diabetic eye screening appointments
- Go to diabetes care every 6 months
- If you smoke, get support to help you stop. Visit www.quit.ie for advice.
- If you are worried about your eyes, do not wait for your next eye screening appointment.
- You should talk to your doctor, eye doctor, or optician if your eyesight gets suddenly worse.

More information

Diabetic RetinaScreen

National Screening Service

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An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

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