



# Vision Basics: Eye Diseases





# General health conditions can be detected by an eye exam

Eye exams can help identify signs of serious general health conditions like<sup>1</sup>:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Eye diseases like glaucoma and cataracts

<sup>1</sup>"20 Surprising Health Problems an Eye Exam Can Catch," <https://www.aaopt.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/surprising-health-conditions-eye-exam-detects>, 2020.

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Eye diseases

# Diabetic retinopathy\*

- Occurs in diabetics when changes in the blood vessels of the retina either:
  - Swell or leak fluid
  - Cause new blood vessels to grow on the surface
- Often goes undiagnosed until it's too late because initial symptoms are hard to detect

## Symptoms may include:

- Floaters or blurriness
- Dark areas of vision
- Difficulty perceiving colors

\*This should not be considered medical advice. Please consult a doctor.

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HEALTHY

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# Macular degeneration\*

- Leading cause of vision loss in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- Occurs when the central portion of the retina deteriorates
- Often detected during an eye exam before changes in vision even occur

## Symptoms may include:

- Distorted or wavy vision
- Gradual loss of color vision or decreased color brightness
- Blurry or blind spots in the center of your field of vision
- Vision haziness

<sup>1</sup>American Macular Degeneration Foundation, 2019. <https://www.macular.org/what-macular-degeneration>. \*This should not be considered medical advice. Please consult a doctor.

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# Glaucoma\*

- Group of eye conditions resulting in optic nerve damage that may cause vision loss
- Can damage vision so gradually there may not be any perceived loss of vision until it's at an advanced stage
- If detected and treated early, it can be slowed or stopped

## Symptoms may include:

- Severe eye pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Sudden vision problems
- Reddening of the eye

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# Cataracts\*

- Cloud the normally clear lenses of the eye - making it seem like you're looking through a foggy window
- Typically age-related and develop slowly (and only interferes with vision gradually)

## Symptoms may include:

- Clouded or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light and glare
- Fading or yellowing of colors
- Frequent changes in eyeglass prescription
- Increasing difficulty with vision at night

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