NHS
Suffolk and
North East Essex

Diabetic Eye Screening

Frequently Asked Questions

Translated into easy read
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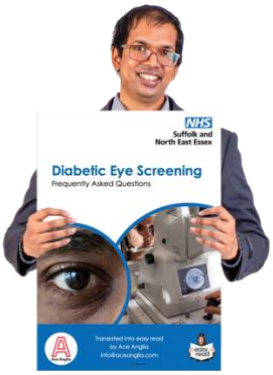
Ace Anglia

easy read



About this booklet

This is an easy read booklet about diabetic eye screening.

- Section 1
- Section 2
- Section 3
- Section 4

We have split this booklet into sections to make it easier to read.

Blue Words

The words in **blue** are ones we think need to be explained.

We explain what the blue words mean.

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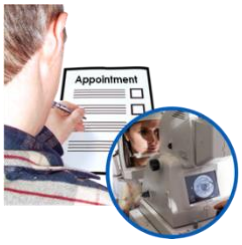

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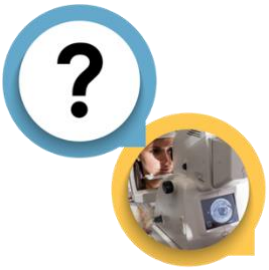

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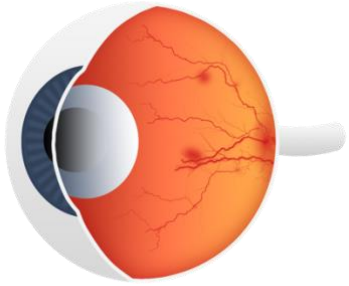
What is diabetic eye screening?

It is a test to check for eye problems caused by diabetes.

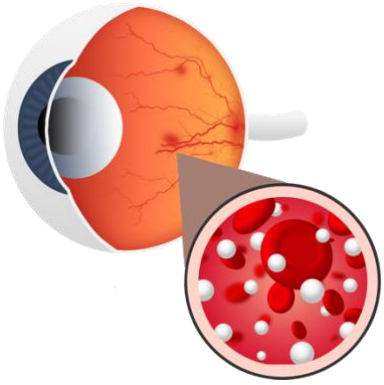
Who is offered diabetic eye screening?

Everyone with diabetes who is over the age of 12.

What are the eye problems that can be caused by diabetes?



Eye problems caused by diabetes are called diabetic retinopathy.

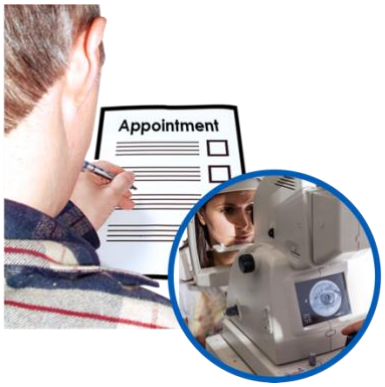


Diabetic retinopathy is when you have high blood sugar levels that damage the back of the eye.

This can lead to sight loss if it's not found early.

My eyesight seems ok, why is it important for me to have the eye screening?

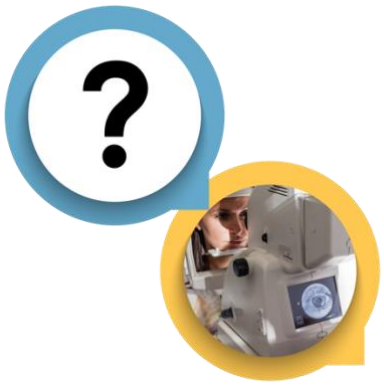
The eye screening test can find problems before they affect your sight.



What do I need to take for my screening appointment?

Take all the glasses and contact lenses you wear, along with contact lens solution.

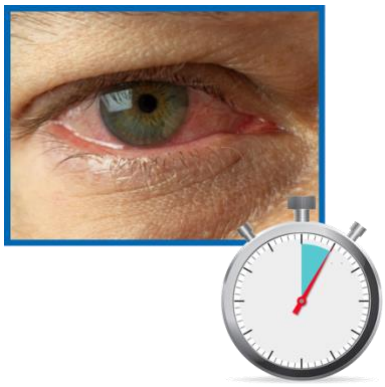
You might want to take sunglasses to wear after the appointment as everything can look very bright.



What happens during the test?

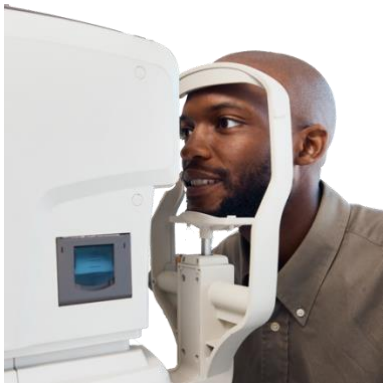
You'll be asked to read some letters on a chart first.

Drops are then put in your eyes.



These may sting for a few seconds.

After about 15 minutes your sight will be blurry.



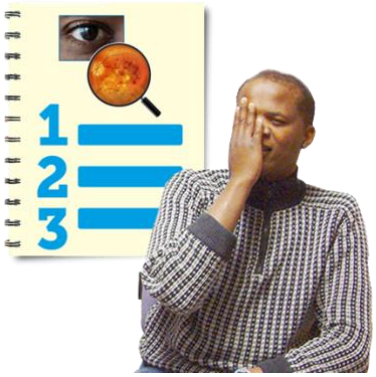
You will be asked to look into a camera.

The camera will not touch your eyes.

Pictures are taken of the back of your eyes.

There will be a bright flash when a picture is taken.

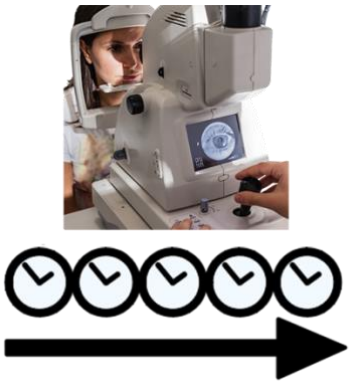
I have a learning disability and I think I will need extra help



Here are some things that will make it easier for you before and during your diabetic eye screening:

- Easy read appointment letters with large print

- Appointment reminder sent to your phone

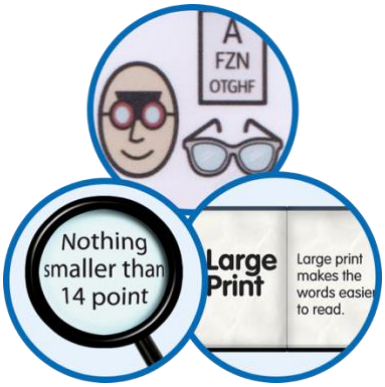


- You can ask for a longer appointment if you need it.

- You can arrange a visit and meet the staff before your screening appointment

- Quiet waiting areas and quiet appointments times if you need them

- Storyboard with pictures and step-by-step information about what will happen at the screening



- Charts with pictures, larger letters, and larger prints

How long does it last?

Your appointment will usually last about 30 minutes.

Can I take someone with me to the screening?

Yes, you can take someone with you to the screening.

It is a good idea to take someone with you to the appointment as the eye drops may make your vision blurred.

Will I be able to see ok after the screening?

Your vision will be blurry for up to 6 hours after the screening.

If you drive, then you should not drive straight after the test.

Everything can look very bright for a few hours after the test.

You may want to take sunglasses to wear afterwards.

What should I do if my eyesight is still blurry after 6 hours and my eyes are painful?

You should go back to where you had the test done or to A & E if:

- your eyes become very painful.

- Or if your eyes turn red, or your sight is still blurry after 6 hours.

When will I get the results of the screening?

You'll get a letter about your result within 6 weeks.

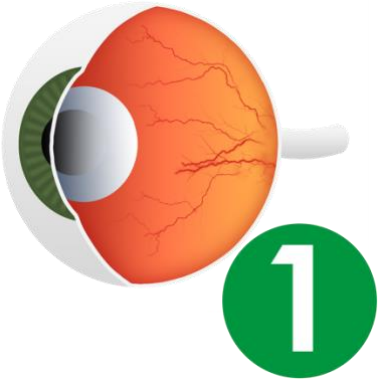
They won't be able to give you any results on the day.

What should I do if I haven't had a results letter after 6 weeks?

Contact your GP and tell them you haven't received your results.

What will the results letter tell me?

There are 3 types of result:



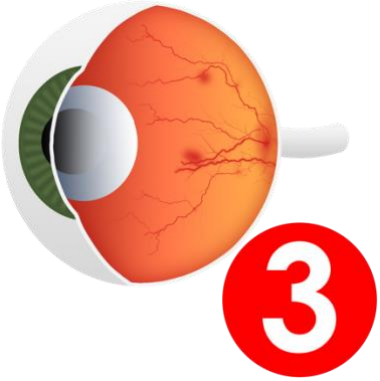
1. **No retinopathy** which means no changes to your eyes were found.

You'll be asked to come back for another test in 1 year.

2. **Background retinopathy** which means your diabetes has caused some small changes to your eyes.

Your sight is not affected, but it might get worse if you do not follow advice about how to prevent eye damage from diabetes.

You'll be asked to come back for another test in a year.



3. **Referable retinopathy** which means you have eye damage that could affect your sight.

You'll be referred to a specialist to talk about what happens next.

You may need to have screening tests more often.

You may need treatment for eye damage from diabetes.

What happens if they can't get clear pictures during the screening?

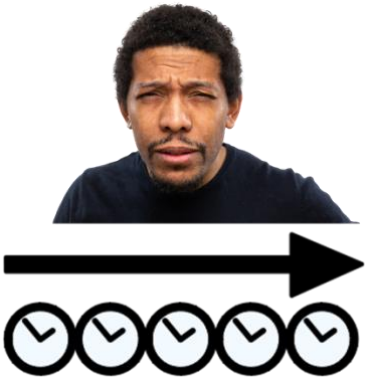
Sometimes the pictures of your eyes may not be clear enough to give a result.

If this happens, you'll be asked to have another test.

How often will I have an eye screening appointment?

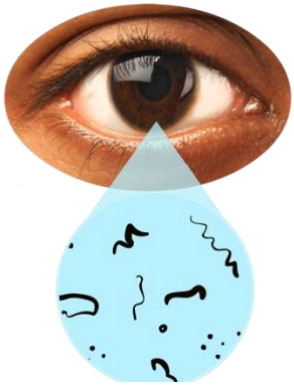
Every year.

Eye problems symptoms to look out for



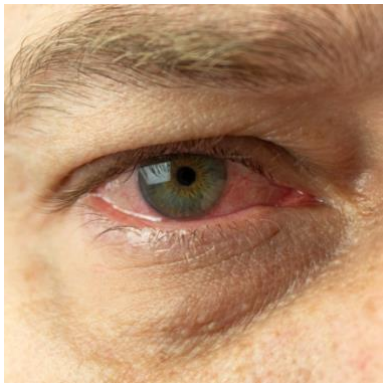
- Your vision maybe slowly getting worse

- A sudden vision loss



- Seeing small shapes floating in front of you

- Blurred or patchy vision



- Eye pain or redness

- Finding it hard seeing in the dark

This screening booklet was co-produced by:

- Ace Anglia
- East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- Suffolk GP Federation

This booklet was translated into easy read by Ace Anglia.

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