

Glossary

The following is a glossary of terms that are commonly used when talking about diabetes.

Cataract

Cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision.

Diabetes

Diabetes is a very serious disease in which the glucose (sugar) levels in the blood are high. Diabetes can cause problems such as blindness, heart disease, kidney failure, and amputations. Only a doctor can diagnose diabetes.

Diabetic retinopathy

Diabetic retinopathy is an eye complication of diabetes and a leading cause of blindness.

Dilated eye exam

A dilated eye exam allows an eye care professional (ophthalmologist or optometrist) to see more of the inside of the eye to check for signs of disease. During a dilated eye exam, drops are placed in the eyes to widen or dilate the pupils.

Glaucoma

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can damage the optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. Glaucoma occurs when the normal fluid pressure inside the eyes slowly rises. However, with early treatment, you can often protect your eyes against serious vision loss.

Glucose

Glucose is the main sugar found in the blood. It is a source of energy for the body. Insulin regulates the level of glucose in the blood. In diabetes, the glucose levels are high.

Low vision

Low vision means that even with regular glasses, contact lenses, medicine, or surgery, people find everyday tasks difficult to do. Reading the mail, shopping, cooking, watching TV, and writing can all seem challenging.

Macula

The macula is the small sensitive area of the retina that gives central vision.

Macular edema

Macular edema is an eye condition where fluid leaks into the center of the macula, the part of the eye where sharp, straight-ahead vision occurs. The fluid makes the macula swell, blurring vision.

Ophthalmologist

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who specializes in eye and vision care. Ophthalmologists are specially trained to provide the full spectrum of eye care, from prescribing glasses and contact lenses to performing complex and delicate eye surgery.

Optometrist

An optometrist is the primary healthcare professional for the eye. Optometrists examine, diagnose, treat, and manage diseases, injuries, and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures. They also identify related systemic conditions affecting the eye.

Pancreas

The pancreas is an organ in the body that makes insulin and enzymes for digestion. The pancreas is located behind the stomach.