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DIABETES AND THE EYES

Diabetes is a serious disease that can cause blindness, heart disease and kidney failure.

Diabetic eye disease may include damage to the blood vessels in the retina (diabetic retinopathy), clouding of the eye lens (cataract) and increased eye pressure (glaucoma). The most common diabetic eye disease is retinopathy, which is a leading cause of blindness in American adults. It is caused by changes in the blood vessels in the retina. In some people, retinal blood vessels may swell and leak fluid; in other people, abnormal new blood vessels grow on the surface of the retina. When severe, these changes may result in reduced vision and/or blindness. The visual loss is painless and may occur without warning.

The good news is that today with improved diagnostic tools and technology available, only a small percentage of people who develop retinopathy will have serious vision problems. Your best protection against loss of vision is optimizing blood sugar levels with the help of your primary care provider and dilated eye exams that need to be performed yearly. **EARLY DETECTION OF DIABETIC RETINOPATHY IS THE BEST PROTECTION AGAINST LOSS OF VISION!**

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 Clinical Asst. Professor,
 Mt. Sinai School of Medicine

George Conдах, M.D.
 Clinical Instructor,
 Mt. Sinai School of Medicine

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