

Eye on Health **Free Eye Care Help For Seniors With Diabetes**

(NAPS)—Vision loss resulting from diabetes is a leading cause of blindness among adults in the United States. Diabetic retinopathy causes up to 24,000 new cases of vision loss each year, and people with diabetes are 25 times more likely to lose vision than those without the disease.



Photo credit: National Eye Institute

Annual dilated eye exams can help reduce the risk of blindness caused by diabetes.

Health experts say that early detection, timely treatment and appropriate follow-up care can reduce the risk of blindness by 95 percent, even for people with established and significant diabetic retinopathy.

In a national effort to help reduce blindness caused by diabetes, EyeCare America has created its Diabetes EyeCare Program. The program promotes annual, dilated eye exams for seniors with diabetes, raises awareness about diabetic eye disease, provides free educational materials and facilitates access to medical eye care.

Those eligible for a referral through the program receive an eye exam and treatment for up to one year at no out-of-pocket cost to qualified patients. To see if you, a loved one or a friend is eligible to receive a referral for an eye exam and care, call 1-800-272-EYES. All eligible callers receive a referral to one of EyeCare America's 7,500 volunteer ophthalmologists.