**Here’s Why People With Diabetes Shouldn’t Skip Eye Appointments**

Things happen: appointments are forgotten, other health issues crop up, financial problems happen. But missing eye exams may be vision-threatening for patients with diabetes. [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] joins the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](https://www.aao.org/) in reiterating the importance of eye exams during the month of November, which is observed as Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month.

Diabetes is the leading causes of preventable blindness in the United States among adults age 20 to 74 and is the fifth most common cause of preventable blindness globally. Among the 30 million Americans with diabetes, about one-third have diabetic retinopathy, the potentially blinding complication of diabetes.

People typically don't notice changes in their vision in the disease's early stages. But as it progresses, diabetic retinopathy usually causes vision loss that in many cases cannot be reversed. That’s why it’s so important that everyone with diabetes have yearly exams for early detection.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention consistently reports that less than two-thirds of people with diabetes undergo their recommended annual dilated ophthalmic examination. These rates are even lower among children and adolescents with diabetes, with less than half of youth with type 2 diabetes receiving an examination within six years of diagnosis.

[INSERT YOUR SPOKESPERSON’S QUOTE HERE]

To learn more ways to keep your eyes healthy, visit the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s [EyeSmart](https://www.aao.org/eye-health)® website.