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Nutrition for Your Eyes

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Fact

- Good nutrition is essential for eye health



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Eyes are highly metabolic organs

- This means our eyes require a lot of oxygen and glucose (energy) to run properly.



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Deep Green Vegetables & Bright Fruits

- Zeaxanthin and Lutein are pigments found naturally in our retinas and in brightly colored fruits and vegetables.



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Zeaxanthin

- Bok Choy
- Kale
- Collard greens
- Spinach
- Orange peppers



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Lutein

- Corn
- Other fruits and vegetables high in these nutrients
 - Kiwi
 - Grapes
 - Squash



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Carrots

- Carrots contain beta carotene
 - Good for our eyesight
 - Beneficial in helping prevent age-related eye disease



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Omega-3 fatty acids

- Important for dry eyes (tear deficiency syndrome)
- Dry eyes happens when the body doesn't produce enough tears or good quality tears.
- Many people with dry eye have deficiency in lipid or fatty component and omega-3 supplement improves that



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Flax Seed

- Good source for omega-3s
- Must be whole or whole-ground seeds
- Chia seeds is also a good source



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Vitamin C

- Recent study shows vitamin C might be beneficial for glaucoma
- Vitamin C is water soluble so its difficult to get too much
- Try to get 500-1000mg per day of Vitamin C



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Eye Complications

- Many hear that diabetes causes eye problems and may lead to blindness.
- People with diabetes do have a higher risk of blindness than people without diabetes
- Most people who have diabetes have nothing more than minor eye disorders.



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Glaucoma

- People with diabetes are 40% more likely to suffer from glaucoma
- Glaucoma occurs when pressure builds up in the eye.
- The pressure pinches the blood vessels



Glaucoma

- Glaucoma occurs when pressure builds up in the eye.
- The pressure pinches the blood vessels that carry blood to the retina and optic nerve.
- Vision is gradually lost because the retina and nerve are damaged.



Treatments for Glaucoma

- Some drugs can be used to reduce pressure in the eye
- Some treatments involve surgery



Cataracts

- People with diabetes are 60% more likely to develop this condition
- People with diabetes also develop cataracts at a younger age and they progress faster.



Cataracts

- This is when the eye's clear lens clouds and blocks light



Treatment for Cataracts

- For mild cataracts, may need to wear sunglasses more often and use glare-control lenses in glasses
- For cataracts that greatly interfere with vision, usually the lens of the eye is removed and sometimes a patient will get a new transplanted lens



Retinopathy

- Diabetic retinopathy is for all disorders of the retina caused by diabetes
- There are two types: nonproliferative and proliferative



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Nonproliferative

- Moves through three stages as more and more blood vessels become blocked
- Most common form of retinopathy where capillaries in the back of the eye balloon and form pouches.



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Proliferative

- This is a more serious form.
- The blood vessels are so damaged they close off.
- In response, new blood vessels start growing in the retina. These new blood vessels are weak and can leak blood, and block vision.
- The new blood vessels also cause scar tissue to grow. After scar tissue shrinks it can distort the retina or pull it out of place called retinal detachment.



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Treatment for diabetic retinopathy

- Photocoagulation
 - The eye care professional makes tiny burns on the retina with a special laser. These burns seal the blood vessels and stop them from growing and leaking.
 - Side effects are several days of blurred vision after treatment and possible loss of side (peripheral) vision
 - When the retina has already detached or a lot of blood has leaked into the eye, photocoagulation is no longer useful



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Am I at Risk for Retinopathy?

- Several factors influence whether you get retinopathy
 - Blood sugar control
 - Blood pressure levels
 - How long you have had diabetes
 - Genes



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The longer you've had diabetes

- The more likely you are to have retinopathy
- Almost everyone with type 1 diabetes will eventually have nonproliferative retinopathy
- Most people with type 2 diabetes will also get it
- Proliferative retinopathy is far less common



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Protect your Eyes

- Do your best to control your blood glucose daily
- Keep your A1C in your target range
- Avoid extreme and frequent blood glucose highs and lows
- Eat a healthy diet
- Do aerobic exercise to improve vascular function
- Wear sunglasses to protect from UV exposure
- Take a MVI



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Busy, Busy, Busy

- We are all busy and those with diabetes have lots of check ups but diabetic retinopathy has no warning signs
- It is only through the eye exam that retinopathy can be detected.
- Early treatment is key
- Please have a yearly eye exam

