

## Diabetic Eye Disease Program

**Finding and treating diabetic eye disease early — before it causes vision loss or blindness — is the best way to control diabetic eye disease.**

*Patients with diabetes should have a comprehensive dilated eye examination at least once a year.*

*The Diabetic Eye Disease Program (DEDP) provides free initial and annual dilated funduscopy eye examinations. These exams are available to patients with type 1 diabetes who are eighteen years old or older and all patients with type 2 diabetes who meet income criteria established by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).*

*Health professionals, caseworkers, and others who work with individuals who have diabetes refer eligible patients to participating ophthalmologists and optometrists*

*in all regions of the state. Funding for the program is provided by the Texas Legislature through appropriations for the Texas Diabetes Council (TDC), Texas Department of State Health Services.*

*The program is administered by DSHS.*



## Preventing Vision Loss

Patients with diabetes should have a comprehensive dilated eye examination at least once a year. Changes in vision or eye problems should be reported to both their regular doctor and eye doctor. Populations with high prevalence of diabetes, such as African Americans and Hispanics, are encouraged to include an annual eye exam in their diabetes management program.

People with diabetes also can take these steps to prevent complications:

- Know their **ABCs** – **A**1c (blood glucose), **B**lood pressure (BP), and **C**holesterol numbers
- Take medicines as prescribed by their doctor
- Monitor blood sugar daily
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Get regular physical activity
- Quit smoking



*For more information about the Diabetic Eye Disease Program, contact:*

Texas Diabetes Program/Council  
Texas Department of State Health Services  
1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3119  
 [www.texasdiabetesCouncil.org](http://www.texasdiabetesCouncil.org)  
 1-888-963-7111 ext. 7490



**KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR  
PATIENT'S VISION**

TEXAS DIABETES PROGRAM/COUNCIL  
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

## Nominators and Their Role

Staff of DSHS Health Service Regions, local health departments, and state and federally supported primary care facilities play a vital role as nominators for the eye disease program.

Nominators assess client eligibility, refer clients to eye care providers, and follow up to insure that patients keep their eye appointments. They also help patients who may need additional follow-up diagnostic and/or treatment services by assisting them in locating financial aid to pay for them.

Nominators are also responsible for initiating and using a patient tracking form when making a client referral to document client eligibility, examination, follow-up data, and claims payment information.

## Becoming a Nominator

To enroll as a nominator for this program, simply request a new nominator packet from the Diabetic Eye Disease Program.



## Participating Providers

Ophthalmologists and optometrists contract with DSHS to perform the initial and annual dilated funduscopy eye examination for eligible clients referred by nominators. If eye disease is suspected, the Diabetic Eye Disease Program will reimburse the provider for two additional funduscopy exams. Providers receive \$60 for each eye examination.

*Payment will not be made for any diagnostic tests, such as fluorescein angiography, or for treatment of eye disease.*

To receive payment for eye exams, providers must have a State of Texas payee identification number. Diabetic Eye Disease Program staff will assist providers without an ID number to obtain one when the fee-for-service contract is processed. Providers also are expected to complete a patient tracking form to document information about client referral, examination, treatment, follow-up, and claims payment.

## Becoming a Provider

To enroll in the Diabetic Eye Disease Program, providers must have a current Texas license to practice medicine or optometry and be in good standing with the Texas Board of Medical Examiners or Texas Board of Optometry, whichever is applicable. Doctors wishing to become a provider can contact the Diabetic Eye Disease Program to request a new provider packet.

## Diabetic Eye Disease Overview

- Diabetic retinopathy is the most common eye complication and is the leading cause of blindness in the United States among adults 25 to 74 years old.
- Diabetic retinopathy causes 12,000 to 24,000 new cases of blindness each year.
- Studies of diabetic retinopathy supported by the National Eye Institute demonstrated that prompt detection and treatment can reduce the incidence of severe visual loss by 50 to 60 percent.
- Glaucoma and cataracts may also be detected during an annual eye exam.

Unfortunately, many persons at risk are not being referred for annual dilated funduscopy eye exams. The purpose of the Diabetic Eye Disease Program is to provide exams to eligible clients with diabetes so that vision-threatening conditions can be identified. Treatment costs associated with these conditions are not reimbursed by the program.

