

## What to do if you notice changes to your sight

If you notice changes to your sight, or have any concerns about your eyes, it is important that you visit your GP, optician or eye doctor immediately. Do not wait until your next screening appointment.

These changes could include:

- sudden vision loss or sensitivity to light
- spots or dark strings floating in your vision (floaters)
- blurred or fluctuating vision (changes in vision)

## How you can reduce your risk of developing diabetic retinopathy

- Attend your free diabetic retinopathy eye screening appointments.
- Control your blood sugar and blood pressure.
- Take your medication as prescribed.
- Attend diabetes care (a health professional) every 6 months.
- If you smoke, get support to help you quit. Visit [www.quit.ie](http://www.quit.ie) for advice.

## The limitations of diabetic retinopathy screening?

Diabetic retinopathy screening is not a replacement for your regular eye exam.

Screening looks for diabetic retinopathy and might not detect other eye conditions.

No screening test is 100% reliable.

## How we keep your information safe

We keep your personal details and health records secure and ensure their confidentiality. We use and store your information in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We only use the information we need:

- to provide you with the best healthcare service
- to comply with our public health responsibilities.

You can request all your personal information and screening records by contacting the programme.

## Where you can find more information

For more information about Diabetic RetinaScreen:

Write to Diabetic RetinaScreen, National Screening Service, King's Inns House, 200 Parnell Street, Freepost FDN7633, Dublin 1, D01 A3Y8

**Freephone 1800 45 45 55**

Email [info@diabeticretinascreen.ie](mailto:info@diabeticretinascreen.ie)

Visit [www.diabeticretinascreen.ie](http://www.diabeticretinascreen.ie)

Please scan this QR code for more information:



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Diabetic   
**RetinaScreen**  
An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Reitíní do Dhiabéitigh  
The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme

# Your guide to 2-yearly eye screening for diabetic retinopathy (screening once every 2 years)

## Who this leaflet is for

This leaflet is for you if your last 2 diabetic retinopathy screening tests showed that you have no retinopathy. Because of this, it is safe for you now to have tests for diabetic retinopathy once every 2 years instead of every year.

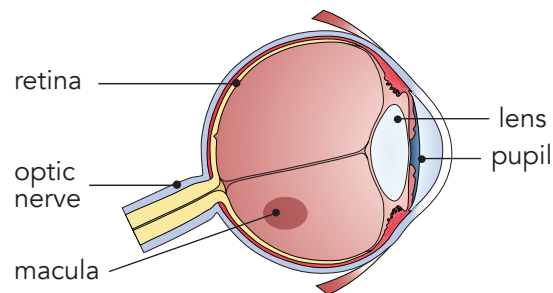
## Why diabetic retinopathy screening is important

Untreated diabetic retinopathy is a very common cause of sight loss for people who have diabetes. When the condition is caught early, treatment is effective at reducing or preventing damage to your sight. Diabetic retinopathy eye screening is a key part of your diabetes care.

## What diabetic retinopathy is

Diabetic retinopathy is a complication of diabetes that affects the small blood vessels at the back of the eye, in an area called the retina.

A healthy retina is necessary for good eyesight.



If you have diabetes, the blood vessels in the retina become thicker and the blood flowing in the blood vessels slows down.

In the early stages, diabetic retinopathy will not affect your sight. But if the changes get worse, eventually your sight will be affected.



## What 2-yearly screening means

It means that you come to a Diabetic RetinaScreen appointment every 2 years instead of every year. At this appointment, you will have the same type of screening test as you usually have.

If you have had 2 recent screening tests showing 'no retinopathy', your risk of developing retinopathy is very low. That is why we believe it is safe for you to attend for screening every 2 years.

Remember: Diabetic retinopathy screening looks only for diabetic retinopathy and may not detect other eye problems. It is important to see your GP (family doctor), eye doctor or optician if you have concerns about your sight.

## When you will get your results

We will send you and your GP a letter about your test results within 3 weeks of your test appointment. This letter will set out the next steps.

## What will happen next

After your next Diabetic RetinaScreen test, you will have 1 of the following 3 outcomes:

1. No change – your test shows that there are no changes to your eyes. This means we will call you back for a screening appointment in 2 years, and you will receive an appointment in the post.
2. Some changes – your test shows there are some changes to your eyes, but you still do not need treatment. This means we will call you back for more frequent screening, and you will receive an appointment in the post.
3. Getting worse – your test shows signs of worsening diabetic retinopathy. We will refer you to a Diabetic RetinaScreen treatment clinic in a hospital for further tests or treatment. This follow-up assessment and treatment will be free-of-charge. It is important that you attend this appointment for treatment.

You will remain under the care of the hospital until your diabetic retinopathy shows signs of improvement, and it is considered safe to discharge you back to digital surveillance, or regular screening once a year.

If you want to know more about your screening results, please contact your GP who will be able to assist you.