

## **DIABETIC RETINOPATHY**

### **MINIMIZE THE IMPACT**

If you are diabetic, grab the phone and make a date with your ophthalmologist or optometrist for your yearly dilated-eye exam. This exam, which involves dilating pupils with special drops, allows your doctor to see the retina and other structures at the back of your eye through an ophthalmoscope. With this exam your doctor can detect diabetes-related problems with the retina before symptoms occur.

One of the most common diabetic-related afflictions to the eyes is diabetic retinopathy (DR). In the United States, diabetic retinopathy causes 12,000 to 24,000 cases of blindness a year. Diabetes is a disease that affects the flow of blood and DR occurs when the capillaries in the back of the eye swell and weaken, creating a series of events that can lead to vision impairment.

Even though 80 percent of people with diabetes will develop DR, not everyone loses their vision. Some will only experience difficulty reading the paper or have trouble with night driving. To minimize the impact of DR, watch your blood pressure and weight, as well as cholesterol and blood-sugar levels. And make that appointment for your once-a-year checkup. Louis Schott, MD is an Ophthalmologist seeing patients in the Outpatient Specialists area at Highland District Hospital. His primary practice is in Cincinnati. Just one more specialty physician making the drive from the city to provide you with care. You can make an appointment with Dr. Schott by calling 937.393.6169.

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