



Essex Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

# Diabetic Eye Screening

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Health Intelligence

Essex Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

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# Who we are

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Essex Diabetic Eye Screening Programme  
(EDESCP) formed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016

# Who should be screened?



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- All patients aged 12 and over, with a diagnosis of diabetes should participate in the diabetic eye screening programme. This is the best way to ensure that risk of losing your sight is managed.
- Patients who have had bariatric surgery or no longer show the symptoms of diabetes should still attend for screening. Recent national guidance has confirmed this position.

## The National screening programme state the following:

- *“once there is or has been a definite diagnosis of diabetes, excluding gestational diabetes, the patient should be screened for diabetic retinopathy annually for life.*
- *For those patients who had steroid induced diabetes whose diabetes is now ‘resolved’ the decision about screening should be made on a case by case basis. If there is any doubt, the patient should continue to be offered screening.”*

# Areas covered

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Serving the diabetic population of:

- South East Essex
- South West Essex
- Mid Essex
- North East Essex
- West Essex

# What is Diabetic Retinopathy?

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*When diabetes affects the network of blood vessels supplying the retina at the back of the eye, this is called diabetic retinopathy. Diabetes can cause the blood vessels to become blocked, to leak or to grow incorrectly. There are different types of diabetic retinopathy, and it can be worse for some people than for others, depending on the severity of the changes to the blood vessels.*

2016 RNIB and RCOphth

# Why?



- Diabetic eye screening can detect early signs of diabetic retinopathy
- Diabetic retinopathy is damage to the retina (the 'seeing' part at the back of the eye) and is a complication that can affect people with diabetes
- Retinopathy was the leading cause of blindness in people of working age however since screening began, this has changed
- Helps detect any risk to your vision
- If we find changes, treatment is effective at preventing further damage

*Getting regular retinal screening. The most effective thing you can do to prevent sight loss due to diabetic retinopathy is to go to your retinal screening appointments. Early detection and treatment can stop you from losing sight.*

# Risks to your eyes

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- *Persistent high levels of glucose can lead to damage in your eyes. To reduce the risk of eye problems, blood glucose, blood pressure and blood fats need to be kept within a target range, which should be agreed by you and your healthcare team. The aim of your diabetes treatment, with a healthy lifestyle, is to achieve these agreed targets.*
- *Smoking also plays a major part in eye damage so, if you do smoke, stopping will be extremely helpful.*

# How to reduce the risks

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- *Controlling your blood glucose level  
(also known as blood sugar level)*
- *Tightly controlling your blood pressure*
- *Controlling your cholesterol levels*
- *Keeping fit and maintaining a healthy weight*



# How to reduce the risks

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- Giving up smoking. Nerve damage, kidney and cardiovascular disease are more likely in smokers with diabetes. Smoking increases your blood pressure and raises your blood sugar level, which makes it harder to control your diabetes.
- If you're pregnant and have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, you will have retinal screenings more often during your pregnancy.

# Remember!

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- *Have regular eye examinations with your optometrist. Your annual diabetic screening does not replace your eye test.*
- *Don't wait until your vision has become worse to have an eye test.*
- *Speak to someone at your diabetic eye clinic or to your optometrist if you notice changes to your vision – it may not mean you have diabetic retinopathy. It may simply be a problem that can be corrected with glasses.*

# What happens during your appointment

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- Your personal details will be checked to ensure our information is correct
- You will be asked to read the eye chart so that your visual acuities can be recorded
- Drops will be administered to make your pupils dilate (this is so we can see into the back of your eyes to check for any changes).
- You will be asked to sit out in the waiting area for 10 – 15 minutes to allow the drops to work (this may sting for a few seconds)
- You will be called back in and the Screener will take photographs of your eyes. You will be asked to sit at the camera and follow lights (as instructed by the Screener) This doesn't hurt or cause any discomfort
- You will not be able to drive for up to 4 hours as your vision will be blurred from the drops

# What happens after your eye screening?

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- The images of your eyes will be downloaded onto our computer system and they will be reviewed by qualified and experienced graders who will check for any changes to your eyes
- If referable diabetic retinopathy is detected you will be referred to your local Hospital Eye Service
- Following an appointment at the Hospital, your Consultant may refer you back to our Eye Screening Programme for more frequent reviews
- A copy of your eye screen will be sent to you and your GP within 2/3 weeks of your appointment

# Results

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- In line with national policy, results can be expected within 2 – 4 weeks
- Most GP surgeries will receive results via new software

# Stages of Retinopathy



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## No referral

Your screening results may say either of the following:

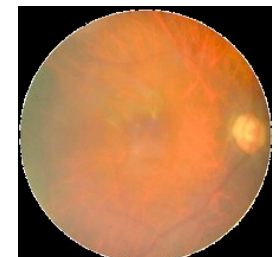
- No retinopathy (yearly recall)
- Background retinopathy (yearly recall)

## Referral

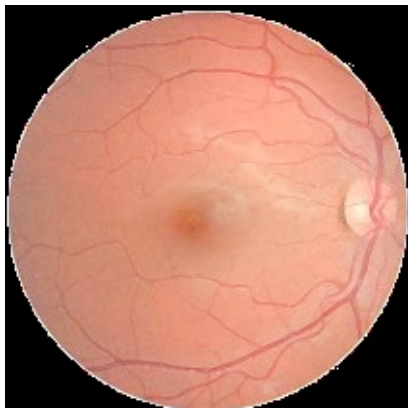
- Pre-proliferative retinopathy (routine referral to Hospital Eye Service [13 – 18 weeks])
- Proliferative retinopathy (urgent referral to Hospital Eye Service [2 – 4 weeks])

## Further screening

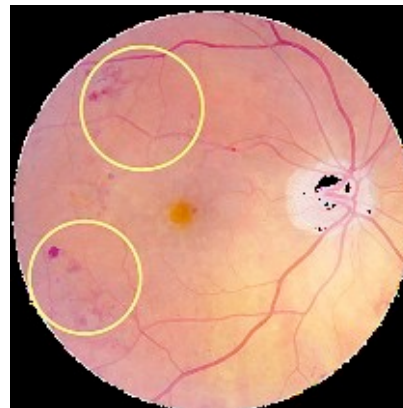
- Unassessable images (referral to further screening using specialist equipment)
- We may need to refer you to a Slit Lamp Biomicroscopy clinic if your images are not clear enough to report a result. This can be because of a cataract making the photographs blurry.



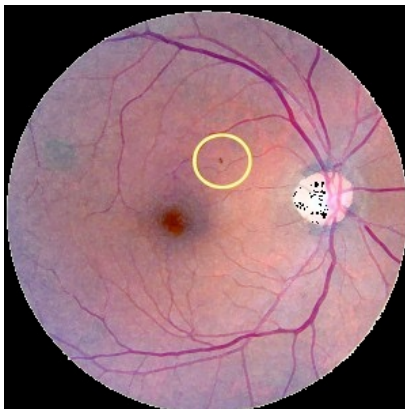
The type of diabetic retinopathy you have depends on how your blood vessels are affected by your diabetes.



**No Diabetic Retinopathy** - images appear normal



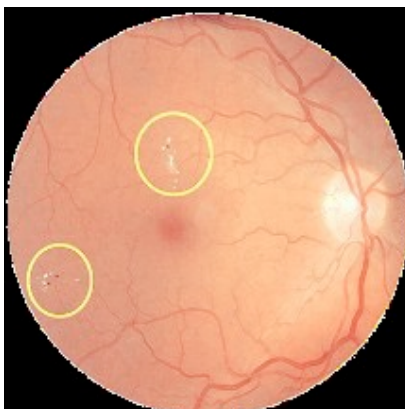
**Pre-proliferative Diabetic Retinopathy (Routine Referral)** - changes were spotted that need further investigation. We will refer the patient to the hospital eye service.



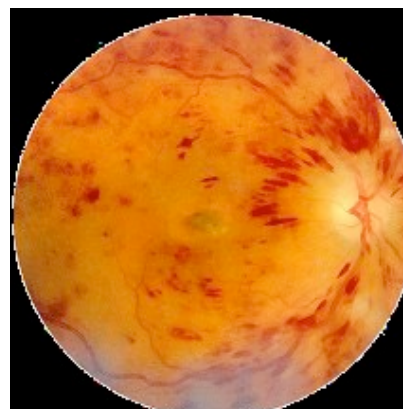
**Background Diabetic Retinopathy** - small changes spotted but they aren't of concern. Sometimes features appear and disappear, so it doesn't necessarily mean there is a problem



**Sight Threatening Diabetic Retinopathy (Urgent Referral)** - large changes were spotted that need prompt further investigation. We will refer the patient quickly to the hospital eye service to ensure no more damage is caused.



**Diabetic Maculopathy (Routine Referral)** - small changes spotted within the macular area. We will refer the patient to the hospital eye service for further investigation.



**Non-Diabetic Eye Diseases** - occasionally during the screening test we will find non-diabetic eye conditions. We will refer patients to the hospital if needed and report our findings to your GP as they may already be aware of the condition.

# Further investigation/treatment

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## Available referral hospitals:

Essex County (Colchester)

Princess Alexandra (Harlow)

Orsett Hospital (Thurrock)

Whipps Cross (London)

Broomfield Hospital (Chelmsford)

Ipswich Hospital (Ipswich)

Southend Hospital (Southend)

Addenbrookes (Cambridge)



# Things to remember



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## DO:

- Cancel and re-book your appointment if you can't attend. Many appointment slots are wasted every day when patients do not attend.
- Bring your prescription glasses with you if you wear them
- Bring sunglasses to wear following your eye screen as your eyes will be sensitive to sunlight after the drops

# Things to remember



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## DO NOT:

- Cancel any Optician appointments, your Diabetic Eye Screening is *NOT* the same as your normal eye test for glasses with your optician. The Eye Screening Service does *NOT* prescribe glasses.
- Do *NOT* drive – your vision will be blurred for up to 4 hours after you have had the drops administered. You will need to arrange a lift or ensure there is public transport available

# Finding out more

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- Comprehensive online information about the Programme

[www.edesp.co.uk](http://www.edesp.co.uk)

- Social Media outlets



**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/essexdesp](http://www.facebook.com/essexdesp)



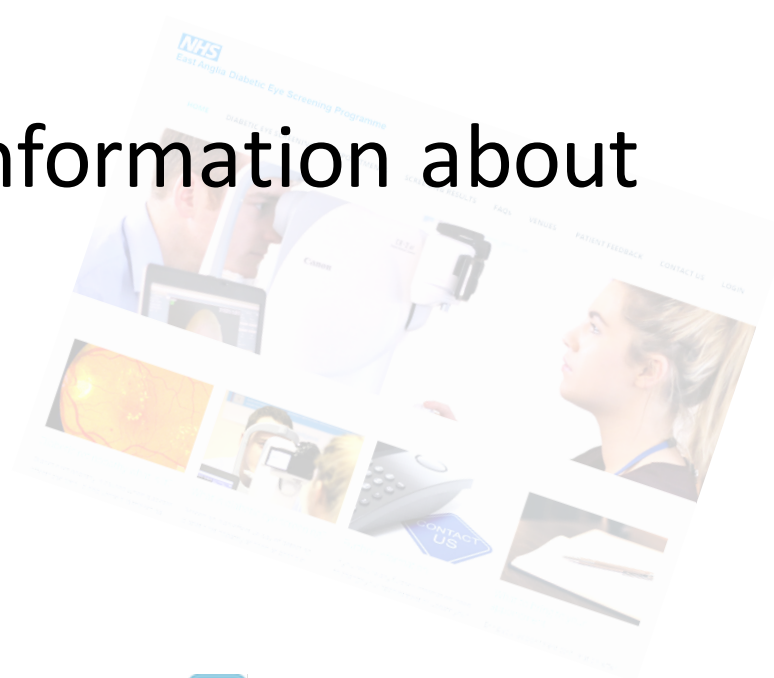
**Twitter**

<https://twitter.com/essexdesp>



**LinkedIn**

[www.linkedin.com/company/essex-diabetic-eye-screening-programme](http://www.linkedin.com/company/essex-diabetic-eye-screening-programme)





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**Any Questions?**