

DIABETES QUARTERLY MEETING JUNE 4TH AT 1:00 PM

Fayette County Health Department Quarterly meeting will be held Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 1:00 PM at the health department classroom. Keri Henry, Pharmacist will be the featured speaker. Please call 283-1044 to reserve your seat.

JUNE IS VISION HEALTH MONTH

See What You've Been Missing

Schedule an eye exam

Regular eye exams are important for maintaining good eye health. A comprehensive eye exam is a painless procedure. It is recommended that people with diabetes have a dilated eye exam **once a year**, even if you think your vision is normal says Debbie Lay RN, Fayette County Health Department Diabetes Prevention and Control program. The eye doctor will use drops to dilate your pupil which allows the doctor to see the back of your eye. Finding eye problems early and getting treatment right away will help prevent more serious problems later on. Ask your eye doctor to check for signs of cataracts and glaucoma. Keep your blood glucose and blood pressure as close to normal as you can. If you are pregnant and have diabetes, see an eye doctor during your first 3 months. Do not smoke.

Diabetes can hurt the retinas. Retina damage happens slowly. Your retinas have tiny blood vessels that are easy to damage. Having high blood glucose and high blood pressure for a long time can damage these tiny blood vessels.

First, these tiny blood vessels swell and weaken. Some blood vessels then become clogged and do not let enough blood through. At first, you might not have any loss of sight from these changes. This is why you need to have a dilated eye exam once a year even if your sight seems fine.

Diabetic retinopathy is the medical term for the most common diabetes eye problem. As diabetes retina problems get worse, new blood vessels grow. These break easily and leak blood into the vitreous of your eye. The leaking blood keeps light from reaching the retina. You may see floating spots or almost total darkness. Sometimes the blood will clear out by itself. But you might need surgery to remove it. Over the years, the swollen and weak blood vessels can form scar tissue and pull the retina away from the back of the eye. If the retina becomes detached, you may see floating spots or flashing lights. Or feel as if a curtain has been pulled over part of what you are looking at. Call the doctor right away if you are having any vision problems or if you have had a sudden change in your vision.

Schedule annual eye exams and keep your blood glucose and blood pressure as close to normal as you can.

<http://www.fayettehealthdept.org>