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In each issue of **Diabetes Resources** we have provided specific information about management for diabetes, including important tests and resources to help reduce complications associated with the disease. Information is included about the ABCs of diabetes: **A1C testing 2-4 times per year, Blood pressure screening at every visit, and annual Cholesterol testing. Additional clinical information is also provided. A dilated eye exam, sensory foot exam and screening for kidney disease are each recommended annually. Attention to these risk factors reduces the chance for cardiac, renal, eye and vascular disease secondary to diabetes.**

In support of the **New Mexico Adult Diabetes Practice Guideline 2011**, please see the reverse side of **Diabetes Resources** for recommendations for care including resources and tools that can help in your efforts to provide education and support among your patients with diabetes.

Check [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org) for organizations that have graciously provided funding for **Diabetes Resources**.

New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes, a New Mexico non-profit corporation, is a broad coalition of New Mexico's diabetes care professionals, New Mexico Health Plans, the New Mexico Department of Health, and the New Mexico Medical Review Association, with technical and administrative support from the American Diabetes Association.

# Diabetes Resources

## Practical Information for New Mexico Health Care Professionals



A quarterly publication for clinicians caring for people with diabetes - Vol 15 No. 21, 2011

## Retinal Exams a Must Diabetic Eye Disease Is Preventable

### The Issue:

Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in the United States adult population and causes 12,000 to 24,000 new cases of blindness annually.<sup>1</sup> Up to 90 percent of diabetes-related blindness could be prevented by appropriate screening and treatment.<sup>2</sup>

Two physician-driven interventions can substantially reduce the risk or progression of retinopathy: treating high blood pressure to goal (<130/80) and reducing A1C to goal (<7.0%).

1. Standard prophylactic aspirin therapy that is now recommended for most people with diabetes does not increase the risk of retinal hemorrhage.
2. Routine retinal examinations to detect early diabetic retinopathy can prevent blindness by facilitating the prompt referral for treatment of sight threatening disease. If caught early enough, treatments for diabetic retinopathy can reduce the risk of permanent visual impairment from 60% to less than 2%.<sup>3</sup> Those with diabetes are 40% more likely than those without diabetes to also suffer from glaucoma and other ocular pathology.

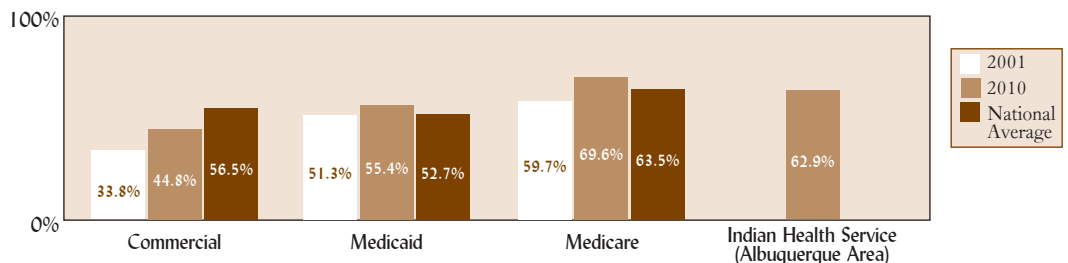
There are two major types of diabetic retinopathy: nonproliferative and proliferative.

1. Nonproliferative retinopathy is the more common form of retinopathy where blood vessels in the retina form aneurysms which can leak fluid. Fluid leaking into the central retina is called macular edema which, left untreated, can cause permanent visual impairment.
2. Proliferative retinopathy usually develops from the progression of nonproliferative retinopathy. In proliferative retinopathy, the normal retinal blood vessels are destroyed and new fragile vessels form. The new vessels, because of their fragility, leak blood which leads to permanent visual impairment and secondary ocular diseases such as retinal scarring and detachment.

Individuals who develop type 2 diabetes at an earlier age are more likely to develop eye disease even if they control their diabetes.<sup>4</sup>

### New Mexico's Numbers:

Percentage of People with Diabetes Who Received a Dilated Retinal Exam in 2001 and 2010<sup>5-7</sup>



1 National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, National Diabetes Statistics, [www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubx/pdf/ndfs\\_2007.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubx/pdf/ndfs_2007.pdf).  
 2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998, [www.healingwithnutrition.com/ddisease/diabetes/diabetes.html#A4](http://www.healingwithnutrition.com/ddisease/diabetes/diabetes.html#A4).  
 3 Cavallerano J, Joslin Diabetes Center, American Telemedicine Association, 2008.  
 4 Swetha V, Jeganathan E, et al. Ocular associations of diabetes other than diabetic retinopathy. *Diabetes Care* 31:1905-1912, 2008.  
 5 Data reported using nationally validated HEDIS® methodology. Rates derived from meeting continuous enrollment requirements. HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). HEDIS 2010 data for CY 2009 provided by BCBSNM, Molina Healthcare of New Mexico, Lovelace Health System, Presbyterian Health Plan and UnitedHealthCare.  
 6 Indian Health Service data were provided for the Albuquerque Area and based on Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) indicators from 2010 fiscal year.  
 7 National average data provided by Quality Compass for CY 2009.

# Resources for Clinicians

The following resources are FREE and can be downloaded from the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website at [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org). For further information contact Charm Lindblad, Executive Director, at 505.796.9121 or toll-free 1.866.796.9121.

**Current Clinical Recommendation**—The New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes Adult Practice Guideline 2010 recommends that all people with diabetes have a dilated retinal examination annually by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. In some cases, use of a properly monitored retinal camera may be appropriate. The guideline is available at [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org).

**Diabetic Eye Examination Report**—This form was developed by the American Optometric Association to improve communications about important ocular and systemic findings between the optometrist and a doctor of the patient's choice following the eye examination. In addition, the form offers an opportunity to educate the patient about the importance of annual dilated eye examinations. The form is available at [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org).



**Patient Reminder Cards**—The use of reminder cards is an effective strategy to encourage patients to receive care and facilitate communication between health care professionals and their patients with diabetes. New Mexico Health Care Takes on Diabetes provides these in two different formats as samples for use by either primary care providers or eye care professionals. These reminder cards, written in an easy-to-read format, encourage patients with diabetes to visit their ophthalmologists or qualified optometrist to receive their annual dilated retinal exam. If patients have already received their annual screening, they are encouraged to share exam results with the PCP's office in an effort to maintain comprehensive medical records.



**Don't Lose Sight of Diabetic Eye Disease: A Patient Resource**—If you have diabetes and your blood sugar gets too high, it can damage the blood vessels in your eyes. This damage may lead to diabetic retinopathy. The Don't Lose Sight brochure, available in both English and Spanish, is focused on patients and describes diabetic retinopathy and how to keep eyes healthy. This information is also available in a patient-friendly brochure format at [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org).



**Working Together to Manage Diabetes: A Guide for Pharmacy, Podiatry, Optometry, and Dental Professionals**—The Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the National Diabetes Education Program, has created a resource that could be used by healthcare providers for their own learning on the specifics of diabetes and encourages a team approach to the treatment of diabetes. This resource reviews the roles of multi-health care disciplines as they participate in the diabetes care team and promotes a collaborative effort in the treatment of a person with diabetes. This resource is available at [ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/PPODprimer\\_color.pdf](http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/PPODprimer_color.pdf).

NMHCTOD provides patient education materials and a guideline for patients with diabetes that includes eye care at: [www.nmtod.com](http://www.nmtod.com). The NMHCTOD patient guideline is available at [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org).

**Websites**—The editorial committee has identified a select number of websites about diabetic retinopathy that we think you will find informative. To access these websites, please visit the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website [www.nmtod.org](http://www.nmtod.org).\*

\*Please note that these websites do not necessarily represent the views of New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes. They are listed for your reference and convenience. NMHCTOD does not evaluate websites for content accuracy or application to any clinical situation.

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