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Early Detection is Key to Preventing Vision Loss

By ARA Content

Early Detection is Key to Preventing Vision Loss

by: **ARA Content**

Don't wait for symptoms --- regular exams are recommended

(ARA) – Which of your five senses would you most fear losing?

Most people say they fear losing their vision. Our eyesight enables us to maintain our independence, to gather information, to enjoy the people and places that are dear to us.

And yet, few of us worry enough about our eyesight to schedule regular eye exams to detect diseases that can lead to vision loss.

"People say they're too busy or that there is nothing wrong with their vision and they don't need an eye exam," says Emily Chew, MD, an ophthalmologist at the National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health. "But it's important to know that in many instances, there are no symptoms of eye diseases. It's like high blood pressure: by the time you know something is wrong, it may be too late."

But early detection of diseases like glaucoma, diabetic eye disease, macular degeneration and cataracts may prevent vision loss. Regular eye exams, from infancy to late in life, can be the key.

Chew says guidelines on the frequency of eye exams are divided into two groups: the general population and those who are at higher risk.

For the general population, eye exams are recommended at 6 months of age, age 3, age 6 (before entering first grade) and then every two years. From ages 18 to 40, exams through dilated pupils, which allow the eye care professional to view the back of the eye more clearly, are recommended every two to four years, and from 40 to 60, every two to three years.

People who may be at higher risk, and the recommendations for each, include:

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Premature infants who were given oxygen at birth: frequent eye exams during childhood

anyone with a family history of eye disease: a dilated eye exam every 1 – 2 years

Blacks over age 40: a dilated eye exam every 1 – 2 years

anyone over age 60: a dilated eye exam every 1 – 2 years

people with diabetes: a dilated eye exam at least every year

Chew cautions that waiting for symptoms to appear before scheduling an eye exam is not a good idea. "By the time symptoms emerge, often the disease is fairly advanced and harder to treat," she says. "Once vision is lost, it cannot always be restored."

In addition to regular eye exams, there are steps to prevent eye injury and vision loss, Chew says. Anyone who is involved in a "high velocity" sport such as hockey, baseball or squash, should wear eye protection such as goggles or protective glasses. Anyone using tools such as welders and chain saws also should wear eye protection, whether it's for a professional job or a do-it-yourself weekend project. Anyone working with chemicals or solvents also should protect their vision by wearing goggles.

To learn more about protecting your vision, visit the National Eye Institute's Web site at www.nei.nih.gov.

Courtesy ARA Content,

; e-mail:

Family of Diabetics

By David Anderson

Family of Diabetics by David Anderson

Thousands, if not millions of people have diabetes in their family. It's almost tragic the way things happen because it's not always a "common knowledge" among families.

I tell you, it's not until it hits you that it's really awful.

Asking questions can help you and your family dodge the serious complications of diabetes. Early detection and active control of blood sugar levels can save lives.

Have you ever heard anyone ask:

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Do you have diabetes?
Does anyone in your family have diabetes?
Is your vision okay or is it blurry?
Are your feet feeling okay today?

A lot of people get diabetes, but you know, early detection and taking action can save your life or the life of a family member.

Ask your doctor about diabetes and have your blood sugar checked several times a year.

For more information about diabetes, including a Diabetes Quiz and a Free booklet, visit our website at:

<http://hope4diabetes.com/info>

This 20 page FREE booklet will provide you with in-depth information on comprehensive diabetes care. The 7 principles, or steps, will help you to understand, manage and diagnose your potential diabetes risk.

It could help you live a longer and more active life. The booklet is Yours absolutely FREE – No Risk! Share it NOW with the people you love and want to Keep alive!.

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