



Diabetic Retina Screening in Pregnancy

#choosescreeening
#DiabeticRetinaScreen

Partner Pack
14 June 2023



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scagthástála
National Screening Service

Diabetic 
RetinaScreen

An Clár Náisiúnta Scagthástála Reitíní do Dhiabéitigh
The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme



About Diabetic RetinaScreen

Diabetic RetinaScreen (DRS) offers free regular diabetic retinopathy screening to people over the age of 12 who have diabetes.

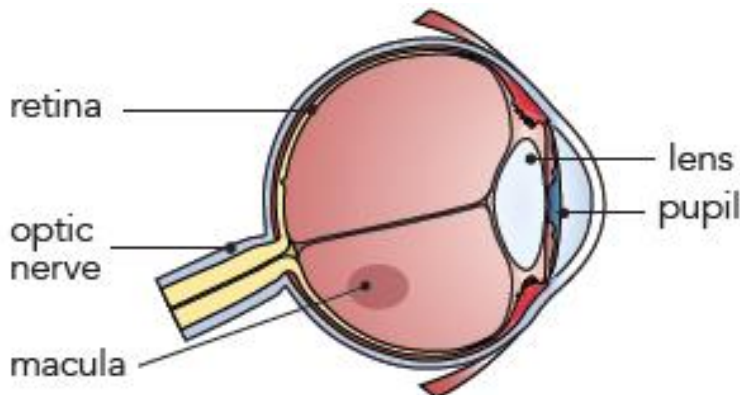
If you have diabetic retinopathy, we aim to detect it and get treatment for it as soon as possible to help reduce any damage to your sight.

Why is diabetic retinopathy screening important?

Untreated diabetic retinopathy is a very common cause of sight loss for people who have diabetes. When the condition is caught early, treatment is effective at reducing or preventing damage to your sight. Diabetic retinopathy eye screening is a key part of your diabetes care.

What is diabetic retinopathy?

Diabetic retinopathy is a complication of diabetes that affects the small blood vessels at the back of the eye, in an area called the retina. A healthy retina is necessary for good eyesight.



If you have diabetes, the blood vessels in the retina become thicker, and the blood flowing in the blood vessels slows down.

In the early stages, diabetic retinopathy may not affect your sight. But if the changes get worse, eventually your sight will be affected.

Diabetic retinopathy is the name for two different changes in the retina that can affect the sight:

Diabetic macular oedema – this is where leaky blood vessels affect the part of the retina called the macula. If fluid leaks from these vessels and affects the centre of the macula, the person's sight will be affected. This is the more common eye change.

Proliferative diabetic retinopathy – this is where fragile new blood vessels form on the surface of the retina over time. These abnormal vessels can bleed or develop scar tissue, causing severe loss of sight.

Both of these changes can be treated and managed if they are detected early enough.

What is diabetic retinopathy screening?

This screening uses specialised digital photography to look for changes that could affect your sight. Frequent eye screening can detect diabetic retinopathy before you notice any changes to your sight.

Diabetic Retina Screening in Pregnancy

Diabetic RetinaScreen (DRS) is launching a new retinopathy screening pathway for women who have diabetes who become pregnant. We expect to screen over 250 pregnant women annually. This new service improves equality and quality of access to eye care for women at risk of sight loss.

Who should have diabetic retina screening in pregnancy

Diabetic retina screening checks for signs of diabetic retinopathy and other eye problems caused by diabetes. Only women who have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes before becoming pregnant need to have more frequent eye screening.

Some women develop a third type of diabetes called gestational diabetes. This happens during pregnancy and usually goes away after the baby is born. You do not need diabetic eye screening if you develop gestational diabetes.

Screening is very important when you are pregnant because the risk of serious eye problems is greater during pregnancy. When retinopathy is caught early, treatment is effective at reducing or preventing damage to your sight.

How often you will have diabetic retina screening during pregnancy

You will be offered screening at, or soon after, your first antenatal (pregnancy) clinic visit and also after 28 weeks of pregnancy. If we find early stages of retinopathy at your first screening, we will offer you another test between 16 and 20 weeks of pregnancy. If we find significant retinopathy at any screening, we will refer you to an eye specialist in an eye treatment clinic in a hospital.

How to register for diabetic eye screening during pregnancy

Your midwife, diabetes nurse or hospital doctor will register you with Diabetic RetinaScreen. Diabetic RetinaScreen will then arrange a screening appointment for you. Your midwife diabetes nurse or hospital doctor can contact us via pregnancyeye@screeningservice.ie

Diabetic RetinaScreen leaflets and posters now available to order

We are delighted to announce that Diabetic RetinaScreen in pregnancy leaflet and poster is now available to order on healthpromotion.ie for your surgery practice, maternity clinic or health promotion event. The poster and leaflet explains what diabetic retina screening is, who is eligible for diabetic retina screening in pregnancy and encourages people to speak to their healthcare professional about diabetic retina screening.

If you have a query about placing an order or an order already placed, please email queries@healthpromotion.ie



Diabetic Retina Screening in Pregnancy



If you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes when you become pregnant, you need to have more regular eye screening



Diabetic RetinaScreen checks for signs of diabetic retinopathy caused by diabetes.

The risk of diabetic retinopathy can increase during pregnancy. The HSE has an eye screening programme for women with diabetes to detect any signs of diabetic retinopathy.

This programme offers free and more frequent screening to women, protecting their sight during pregnancy.

Your midwife, diabetes nurse or hospital doctor will refer you to Diabetic RetinaScreen

For more information www.diabeticretinascreen.ie

Email pregnancyeye@screeningservice.ie



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The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme



Support the campaign

We welcome your support in sharing the campaign messages and the hashtag **#ChooseScreening**

Women with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes who become pregnant may be more at risk of developing diabetic retinopathy. This can cause sight loss if left undiagnosed and untreated.

Your maternity service or midwife will refer you for a free screening test.



Find all messages on our social media channels:

Twitter: @NSShse

Facebook: facebook.com/HSElive

Instagram: instagram.com/irishhealthservice

TikTok: @hselive

If you have any queries, please contact communications@screeningservice.ie