

# Devon in Sight Eye Condition Fact Sheet 11

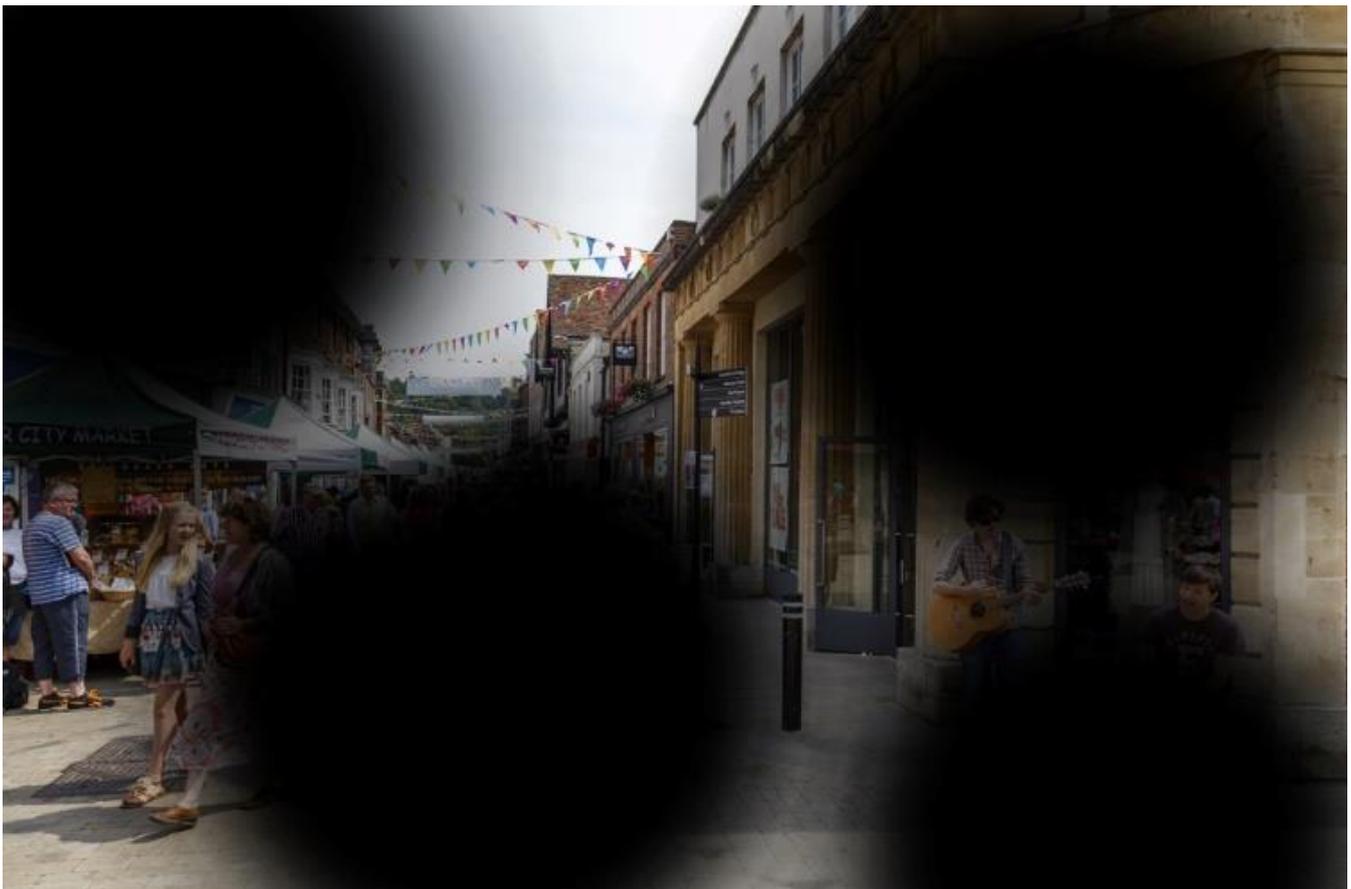
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## Diabetic Retinopathy

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### Introduction

If you have diabetic retinopathy, the small blood vessels in your retina leak blood and fluid into the retina - the light-sensitive layer of cells at the back of your eye. Although this does not affect your vision in the early stages, if it is left untreated it may lead to sight loss.



**Photograph:** Visual representation of Diabetic Retinopathy

## Who is affected by diabetic retinopathy?

Diabetic retinopathy affects people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, especially if you:

- have high levels of blood sugar
- have high blood pressure
- have high cholesterol
- are pregnant
- are of Asian or Afro-Caribbean background.

You can reduce your chances of developing diabetic retinopathy by keeping your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control.

## What are the symptoms of diabetic retinopathy?

The early stages of diabetic retinopathy do not usually have any particular symptoms, so if you are diabetic it is important that you are regularly checked for diabetic retinopathy.

With a few exceptions, the NHS arranges for all people who have diabetes and are aged 12 and over to be invited to have screening for diabetic retinopathy.

Most people with diabetes will need to have the screening done every year. It is very important that you have this done regularly, as early detection of diabetic retinopathy means that treatment is more effective.

If the condition progresses, you may experience the following symptoms:

- gradually worsening vision
- sudden vision loss
- shapes floating in your field of vision (floaters)
- blurred or patchy vision
- eye pain or redness.

## How do you treat diabetic retinopathy?

You will usually be treated for diabetic retinopathy in hospital.

### The main treatments are:

- injections of medication into your eyes
- laser treatment
- an operation to remove blood or scar tissue from your eyes

## Diabetic retinopathy information and support

Diabetes Website: <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/>

RNIB Website: <https://www.rnib.org.uk/eye-health/eye-conditions>

## What to do next?

If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms or your sight loss deteriorates, please contact your GP/Optician/Accident & Emergency Department at your local Hospital.

**If you need any further advice call our Helpline: 01392 876 666**

**Devon in Sight** is a member of the **Helpline Partnership Community**

## Credit

We would like to thank the **Royal College of Optometrists** for their kind permission to reproduce this information.

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## Support Available from Devon in Sight

- **Information, Advice and Guidance**
  - **Demonstrations of Low Vision Aids & Daily Living Equipment**
  - **Assistive Technology Solutions**
  - **Our holistic needs assessment (Sight Loss MOT)**
  - **Training for people with central vision loss (Skills for Seeing)**
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## Information Disclaimer

**Devon in Sight** is committed to producing Information, Advice & Guidance Resources that are clear, accurate, evidence-based, up-to-date and easy to use. We have a robust information production process based on best practice to ensure that information we produce meets the needs of people who are blind or partially sighted and their family and friends.

**Devon in Sight** is not a medical organisation; therefore we can only provide general information that is not intended to be a substitute for a proper medical assessment. Our information is not intended to be used for individual cases. If you have a specific question about your eye condition, we recommend that you consult an eye care professional.

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Our Information, Advice & Guidance Resources were correct at the time of writing. However, due to research and medical advances, the content may not be completely up to date.

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### Devon in Sight Contact Information



**Helpline 01392 876 666**  
**[www.devoninsight.org.uk](http://www.devoninsight.org.uk)**  
**[enquiries@devoninsight.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@devoninsight.org.uk)**

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