CASE MANAGER

What Is a Dilated Eye Exam?

Diabetic macular edema (DME) can occur even before a person experiences any symptoms.[1] That's why it's critical your patients with diabetes get their eyes checked. One of the best ways to diagnose DME is with a comprehensive dilated eye exam.[2]

What Your Patient Should Expect

The doctor puts drops in the eyes to dilate the pupils, allowing a better view of the inside of the eye, especially the retina.[2] Using a special magnifying lens, the doctor will examine the retina and optic nerve for signs of damage.[1] Specifically, they will be looking for[2]:

- Swelling in the macula of the retina (DME)
- Leaky blood vessels in the vitreous and surface of the retina
- New, abnormal blood vessels (proliferative diabetic retinopathy) and/or scar tissue on the surface of the retina

After the exam, the patient's close-up vision may remain blurred for several hours, so the patient should plan for a ride to and from the appointment.[1]

It's important for your patients with diabetes to have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year.[1]

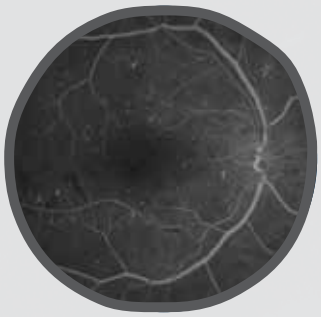

Photo from a fluorescein angiogram

If DME is suspected, patients should be referred to a retina specialist or general ophthalmologist, who may suggest a retinal photography test called fluorescein angiography before recommending treatment. In this diagnostic test, the eyecare professional can more closely evaluate blood vessels in the back of the eye for damage, closures, or leakage.[1,2] In a fluorescein angiogram, a dye is injected into the patient's arm, and photos are taken as the dye passes through the eye. This helps identify closed, damaged, or leaking blood vessels.[2]

Early diagnosis and treatment are important. DME can cause vision problems and even vision loss.[1]

References: 1. National Institutes of Health. National Eye Institute. Facts about diabetic eye disease. http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/diabetic/retinopathy.asp. Accessed February 26, 2015. **2.** American Society of Retina Specialists. Diabetic retinopathy. http://www.asrs.org/patients/retinal-diseases/3/diabetic-retinopathy. Accessed February 26, 2015.

For additional resources, contact your Regeneron National Account Manager.

CCMC® Commission for Case Manager Certification

REGENERON