

Don't Forget Your Eyes and Teeth

Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in the United States.

Save Your Eyes

- Have a complete dilated eye exam each year. (If the results are normal, an eye care specialist may advise getting an exam every 2-3 years.) Make sure your glasses are the best for your needs.
- Discuss how good control of your blood glucose levels can protect your vision.
- Talk about what can be done if you have vision loss.

Three common eye problems for people with diabetes are:

1. Glaucoma: pressure inside the eyeball is too high.
2. Cataracts: eye lenses become cloudy.
3. Retinopathy: damage to the tiny blood vessels inside your retina (the light sensing part of your eye).

If you have no insurance to pay for eye exams, call your local Lion's Club. Some chapters offer help with eye exams and eye care. To find your local club call:

883-4351, or visit online:

http://www.lionsclubs.org/locator/lions/search_form_state.php

High sugar levels in your mouth are bad for your teeth. Brushing twice a day with toothpaste and flossing once a day between your teeth helps keep your teeth and mouth healthy. If your mouth is not clean, you are more likely to get infections in your mouth.

Keep Your Teeth

People with diabetes have a harder time fighting infections, even in the mouth. This can lead to teeth falling out or needing to be pulled.

- Get a complete mouth exam twice a year (once a year if you have no teeth).
- Learn the best way to brush and floss.
- Learn the early warning signs of tooth, mouth and gum problems.
- Discuss the link between your blood glucose and gum disease.

For a more affordable dental cleaning, x-rays or sealants, call the New Hampshire Technical Institute, dental hygienist program in Concord, NH: 271-7160.

For lower priced dentures, call the New Hampshire Dental Society: 225-5961.

For more information, go to:

http://www.ada.org/public/topics/diabetes_faq.asp