

Useful Website: [www.diabeticretinopathy.org.uk](http://www.diabeticretinopathy.org.uk)

### General Information:

- ⇒ If your condition does not improve or gets worse, please contact the surgery during opening hours on 01948 860205.
- ⇒ If you require information or advice which is non-urgent, you can telephone NHS Direct, a 24 hour advice line, on 0845 46 47.
- ⇒ **OUT-OF-HOURS COVER:** Medical advice is always available for emergencies at night, weekends and all bank holidays. If you require advice urgently, please call 01948 860205. The recorded message will give you the number to call for the GP Out of Hours Service.
- ⇒ **EMERGENCIES:** In the event of a serious problem, such as chest pain or collapse, call 999 immediately.

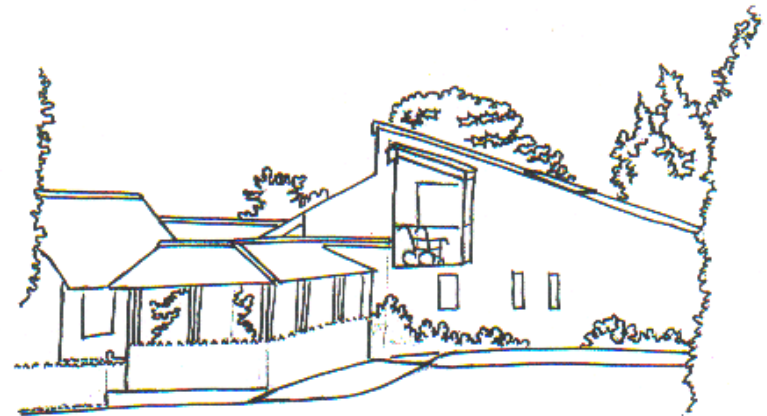


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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS  
**DIABETIC RETINOPATHY**  
LAUREL BANK SURGERY  
MALPAS, CHESHIRE SY14 8PS



*Look After Your Sight!*



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## Diabetic Retinopathy

### WHAT IS IT?

Retinopathy is a potential complication of diabetes.

It is a progressive disease where new blood vessels grow on the retina. The retina is the film at the back of your eye which acts like the film in a camera.

There are four different stages of the disease: in the final stages the blood vessels can bleed and cause scarring of the retina.

You would not notice anything until the disease was well advanced and you have begun to go blind.

### WHO GETS IT?

It can affect all diabetics. The longer you have diabetes the more likely you are to get it.

### WHY DOES IT HAPPEN?

High sugar levels and high blood pressure cause the blood flow to increase. This damages the blood vessels in the membrane of the eye and new vessels grow to replace them.

### HOW TO PREVENT IT?

It cannot be prevented. Its onset can be delayed if you keep blood sugars, blood pressure and cholesterol low by eating well and exercising regularly.



## Diabetic Retinopathy

### HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU HAVE GOT IT?

The only way to find out if you have retinopathy is to be screened. It is therefore important to visit your Optician annually for a **RETINOPATHY SCREEN**.

You may have an eye test if you attend the diabetic clinic at the hospital, but this does not usually involve retinopathy screening.

Not all opticians offer retinopathy screening. It is very important to check this is being done. If you are unsure, we suggest that you contact Francis Opticians, Dobsons Square, Malpas tel: 01948 861259.

Whoever you see for your retinopathy screening, please ask them to send their report to your doctor who will refer you if necessary.

### WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

Treatment is carried out by an Ophthalmologist at the hospital eye clinic. He uses a very fine laser beam to destroy these new vessels.

The sooner the treatment is started, the longer you will preserve your sight.