



# Eye on Health

## A New Look At Diabetes And Vision

(NAPSA)—People with diabetes know well that healthy diet, exercise and regular glucose monitoring are essential for reducing the risk of serious, even life-threatening complications. But for people with diabetes and vision loss—a common side effect of advanced diabetes—there’s yet another level of complication and risk added to a patient’s treatment regimen. If you are one of the 3 million Americans now living with both conditions, there is a new guide from the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) to help you manage your health safely and effectively.

The guide, available at [www.afb.org/seniorsite](http://www.afb.org/seniorsite), addresses the health issues facing people with diabetes and vision loss, such as diet, exercise and monitoring blood glucose levels. The good news is that with the help of specially trained health professionals, you can learn the skills to independently manage your diabetes. Some of these tips include:

**Eat smart.** Healthy eating is where all diabetes care begins. Controlling carbohydrates and fats, using whole grains and eating plenty of fresh vegetables are familiar guidelines to most people living with diabetes. If you also have vision loss, you can learn adaptive techniques for grocery shopping and preparing meals, and giving special attention to measuring portion sizes accurately.

**Stay active.** Regular physical activity is essential to diabetes management. It helps keep heart and blood vessels healthy, can help prevent diabetes-related complications and can help to keep blood glucose levels near normal. Many physical activities can be adapted and enjoyed by people with vision loss, including walking, dancing,



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gardening, swimming and tandem biking. Remember to talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program.

**Monitor your health.** When managing diabetes, your good health depends on your ability to both monitor and understand your blood sugar, as well as your blood pressure, weight and body temperature. If you have vision loss, consider investing in large-print or talking blood glucose meters, blood pressure monitors, thermometers and weight scales.

**Manage your medication.** Medication management is one of the earliest obstacles that people with vision loss must confront in order to continue living independently. Most people are able to address these issues by adopting a few new skills that apply to everything from taking aspirin for a headache to measuring insulin.

To learn more about successfully managing diabetes with vision loss, visit AFB Senior Site at [www.afb.org/seniorsite](http://www.afb.org/seniorsite).