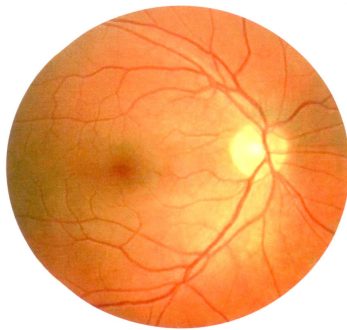
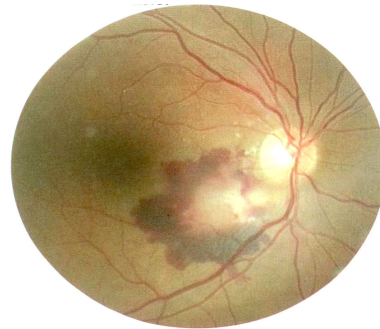


Dear Patient ~

A new, highly sophisticated computerized instrument now allows us to provide you with a more thorough medical analysis of your eye health. The DIGITAL RETINAL IMAGING SYSTEM takes images of the inside of your eye, the retina. The procedure assists your doctor in the early detection of many disorders, including cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, retinal detachments and other vision threatening conditions. The images are stored in the computer and compared with the images from future exams.



Normal Retina



Retinal Bleeding

Our doctors believe that all patients should have this procedure performed. This test will be part of your medical records and annual eye health exam if YOU fall into any of the following categories:

- 1) **YOU ARE A NEW PATIENT TO THIS OFFICE-** Our doctors wish to document the current health of your eyes. Photographs of each retina will act as a baseline for all future retinal exams. The comparison of yearly photos will monitor changes in retinal health and allow our doctors a foundation on which to predict future pathological changes in the vascular and neurological health of each eye as well as your body.

2) **IF YOU ARE OVER 40** – “40” is the age when changes in the refractive status of your eyes occur. This is called presbyopia. Eye health changes such as glaucoma, cataracts, and macular degeneration become more prevalent after 40 years of age.

3) **IF YOU HAVE HIGH CHOLESTEROL, ELEVATED BLOOD PRESSURE OR VASCULAR DISEASE** – The photographs reveal changes in the health of the arterial and venous blood flow in the retina. The retina is the window to the body. It is the only place we can view functioning arteries, veins and nerves without a surgical invasion of the body. This is an opportunity for the doctor and YOU to see and discuss retinal changes and how they are related to your general health.

4) **IF YOU HAVE DIABETES OR ELEVATED BLOOD SUGAR-** Diabetes is one of the three leading causes of blindness. Documentation and careful monitoring of retinal health is absolutely necessary on a semiannual or yearly basis for all diabetics. If diabetic changes such as retinal hemorrhaging (bleeding) are revealed with the use of these photos, frequent monitoring or referral to a retinal ophthalmologist will be in order. With your consent, our doctors will send a report and copies of the photos to your diabetic doctor.

5) **IF YOU HAVE FLASHES, FLOATERS, OR VEILS-** This may indicate a vitreous or retinal detachment. Photographic documentation is necessary for current and future changes in the health of the retina.

6) **IF YOU HAVE HEADACHES OR VISUAL DISTURBANCES SUGGESTIVE OF NEUROLOGICAL PROBLEMS** – Photographic documentation will reveal swelling or enlargement of the optic nerve as it enters the back of the eye and will aid in our diagnosis.

7) **IF YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD** by us or another eye doctor that you have elevated eye pressure, glaucoma, retinal bleeding, macular degeneration or the possibility of one of these conditions.

8) **IF YOUR VISION IS NOT CORRECTABLE TO 20/20** in one or both eyes.

9) **ALL PATIENTS OVER 65 MUST BE PHOTOGRAPHED ANNUALLY.** After the age of 65, the risk of cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration increases considerably. A visual history will aid in providing the best medical treatment available.

# Questions & Answers

**1) Q. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I HAVE RETINAL PHOTOS?**

**A.** If you have elevated pressure, glaucoma, diabetes or any previously diagnosed retinal abnormality such as retinal bleeding, macular degeneration, retinal drusen or optic nerve abnormalities you should have retinal photographs yearly. If your baseline photos are normal and you are not an “at risk” patient then photos every other year will be sufficient.

**2) Q. WHY RETINAL PHOTOS? CAN'T THE DOCTOR JUST LOOK AT MY RETINAS AND TELL IF I'M OKAY?**

**A.** The doctor will examine the retina of each eye, but a picture is worth a thousand words, even trying to describe subtle changes in retinal health. A series of photos from one exam to the next will document these subtle changes and permit the doctor to make comparisons of small and almost imperceptible changes in retinal health that might ordinarily be overlooked without photos.

**3) Q. DOES RETINAL PHOTOGRAPHY REPLACE DILATION?**

**A.** No. The photographs capture the central 45 degrees of the retina that contains the macula and the optic nerve. Dilation reveals the rest of the retina that needs to be examined well.

**4) Q. WILL IT HURT?**

**A.** No. The photographs are taken with a special camera that has a low flash intensity.

**5) Q. WHAT IS THE FEE?**

**A.** Screening retinal photography is \$35 over and above your eye exam. If pathology or an “at risk” condition is documented with the screening photos, a “photographic study” is required, and additional photos are taken. If your insurance company allows this study you will only be responsible for the co-pay or your required deductible. We will determine if you are eligible at the time of your exam.

6) **Q. WILL MY INSURANCE PAY FOR THE PHOTOS?**

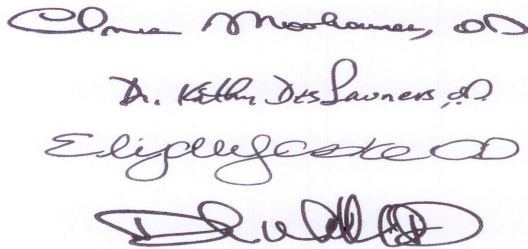
**A.** Currently Medicare will pay for retinal photos if they document certain types of pathology or suspicious conditions that the doctor deems necessary. Some insurance companies will pay for photos. If applicable we will file all fees with your insurance company, but that does not guarantee payment.

7) **Q. IF MY INSURANCE COMPANY DOES NOT PAY FOR PHOTOS SHOULD I HAVE THEM ANYWAY?**

**A.** Yes. The fact that your insurance company does not cover certain testing does not make the tests less necessary. The charge is minimal. Please feel free to discuss any concerns with our staff and doctors.

We look forward to servicing your vision care needs.

Sincerely,



Oliver M. ... D  
A. Keith ... D  
Elizabeth ... D  
D ... D