

## Diabetic Macular Oedema

### What is Diabetic Macular Oedema?

- Diabetic Macular Oedema (DMO) is a serious condition in which fluid builds up on the **macula**.
- The macula is the central part of the retina that controls our central vision, colour vision and fine detail of what we see.
- When the macula swells with fluid, central vision becomes blurry

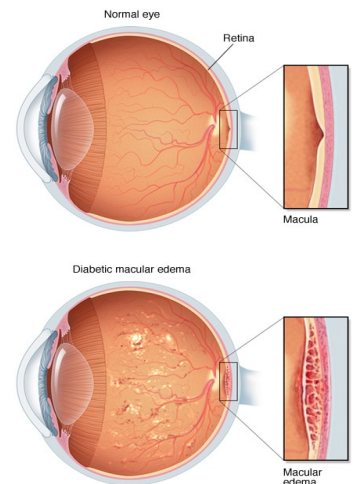


Image from MayoClinic.org

### What causes DMO?

- DMO is caused by long-term exposure to high blood sugar levels caused by diabetes. The longer you have diabetes, the greater your chance of developing sight loss through DMO.
- Other lifestyle factors can increase your risk of developing DMO as well such as
  - Smoking
  - Being overweight
  - Poor control of problems such as high blood pressure or abnormal cholesterol level.

### What are the symptoms of DMO?

A person may not notice any effect on their vision in the early stages.

- Dark spots like a smudge on glasses or gaps may appear in your vision (especially first thing in the morning)
- Changes in shape, size or colour of objects in front of you. They may seem to move or disappear.
- Colours can fade
- Difficulty reading
- Difficulty seeing in bright light or glare
- Straight lines may appear distorted or bent

### Managing your daily living

- Loss of central vision through DMO can be very frustrating and can affect your everyday life.
- Wearing lenses that block UV and blue light can reduce glare and make your remaining vision more comfortable.
- Wearing a hat with a brim or visor also helps shading the eyes from direct sunlight.

### Treatments for DMO



#### Strict diabetes and blood pressure control

- To reduce the risk and prevent further development of DMO, it is important that your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol levels are well controlled.
- Make sure to visit your diabetic nurse, GP or hospital doctor regularly.



#### Injections and implants

- Drugs are injected into the eye to stop fluid leaking from the blood vessels and to reduce inflammation.
- These are not as bad as they might sound. Your eye will be numbed by an eye drop and you should feel no more than a little pressure during the procedure.
- This treatment cannot restore sight if there is already significant damage to the macula.
- Your eye doctor will discuss which injections or implants is most suitable for you.



#### Laser treatment

- Some people may be offered laser treatment when the DMO does not involve the centre of the macula.
- This treatment aims to stabilise vision and does not aim to improve sight.
- Before the procedure, a local anaesthetic will be given to numb your eye as well as an eye drop to dilate the pupils.
- A special contact lens will be placed to hold your eyelids open and allow a laser beam to be focused on your retina.
- This treatment is usually not painful but you may feel sharp pricking sensation.

#### Acknowledgement

This information leaflet is adapted from Macular Society and Diabetes UK

For more information

- [www.macularsociety.org](http://www.macularsociety.org)
- [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)