

# Trachoma, Cataract, Diabetes and Your Eyes



I see for culture



International Centre for Eyecare Education



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- Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia
- Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation
- Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet
- Centre for Eye Research Australia
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For information regarding this resource, contact:

**International Centre for Eyecare Education**

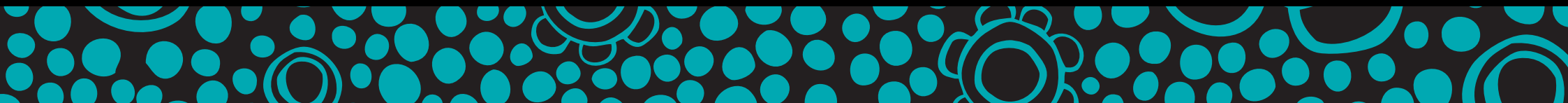
Level 4, North Wing, RMB, Gate 14, Barker Street,

The University of New South Wales | SYDNEY NSW 2052 AUSTRALIA

Ph (02) 9385 7435 | Fax (02) 9385 7436 | [www.icee.org](http://www.icee.org)

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# Sore eyes sisters story

This is Jessica (*point to first child in picture*). Jessica had her eyes checked at the school screening, they said she has trachoma. Her family didn't know she had an eye problem, but she says sometimes her eyes are a bit sticky and a bit sore.

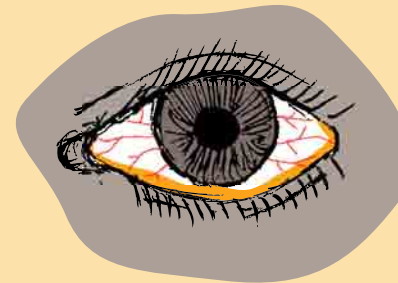
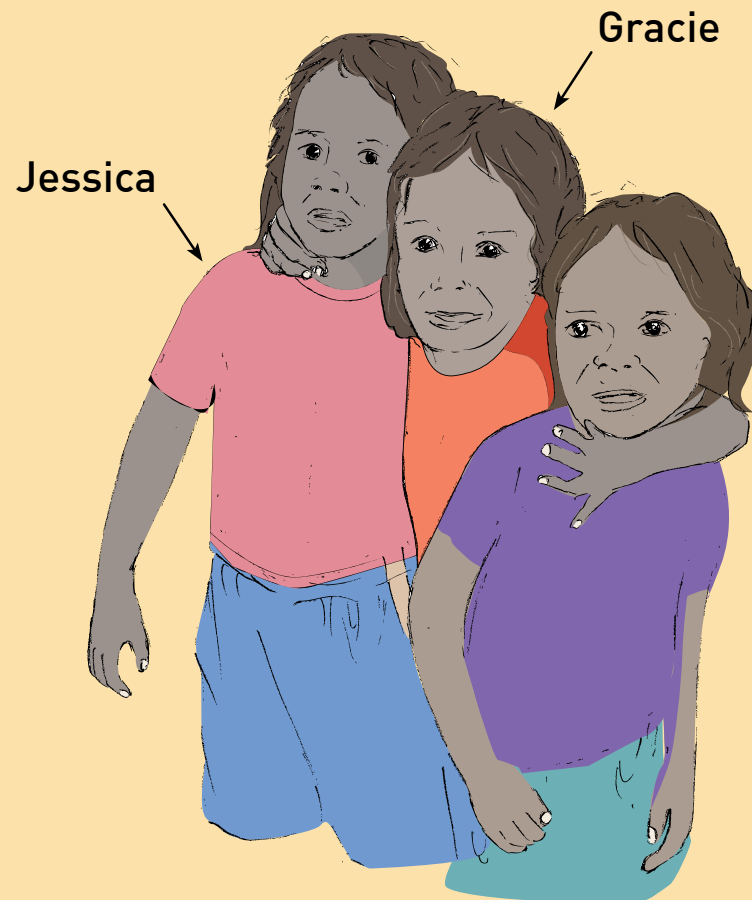
Like some other children, her face and eyes are often dirty .

Jessica's sister Gracie (*point to second child in picture*) is starting to get sticky eyes too.

Jessica and Gracie sometimes sleep on the same bed.

What is happening to their eyes?

# sore eyes sisters story



The eyes are a bit  
sticky and a bit sore

# What is trachoma?

They have **trachoma** - an infection inside the eyelids which can happen to children and adults.

When you get trachoma, your eyes might be a little bit sticky and might be a bit sore.

*(point to first picture)* Trachoma is more common in children with dirty eyes and faces.

A nurse or health worker needs to look underneath your eyelids to see if you have trachoma.

*(point to second picture)*

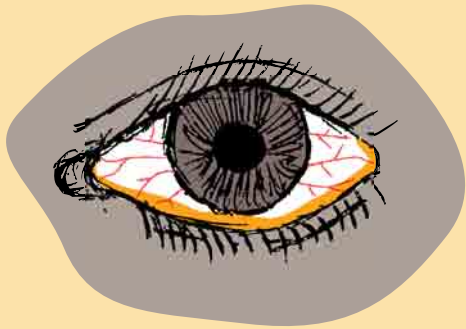
If someone has trachoma there might be white spots under the eyelids. *(point to third picture)*

Sometimes in older people the eyelashes will start to turn towards the eyeball and scratch it.

If this keeps happening, it can damage the front of the eye, so you can't see well. *(point to last picture)*

Trachoma may cause blindness.

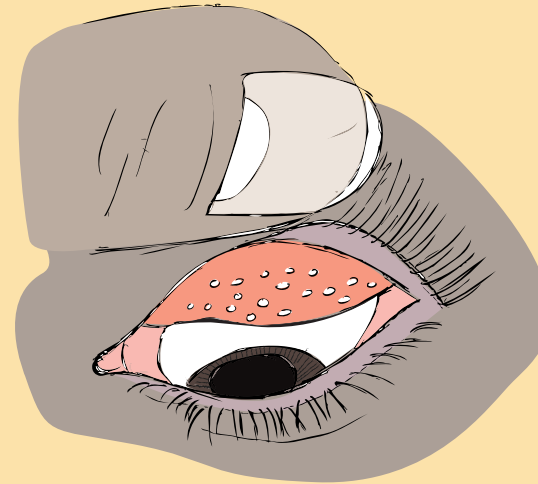
# What is Trachoma?



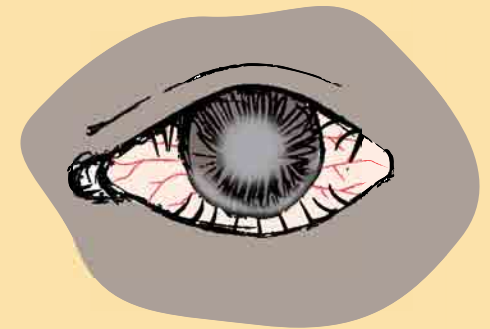
The eyes might be a bit sticky and a bit sore



A health worker needs to look under your eyelids



The eyelids have small white spots under them



The eyelashes can turn in and scratch the eye. This may cause scarring and blindness

# How can you get trachoma?

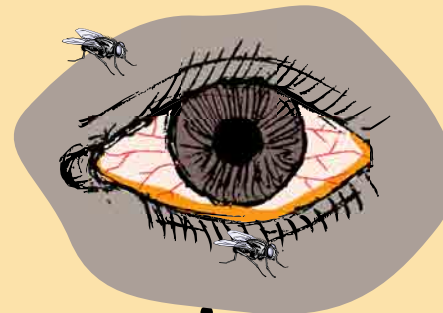
Trachoma is easily spread from the eyes of one person to another person. That is why Jessica's sister, Gracie, got trachoma too.

This can happen when people who have dirty eyes or faces share towels or sheets or sleep close together. *(point to first picture of dirty face and hands)*

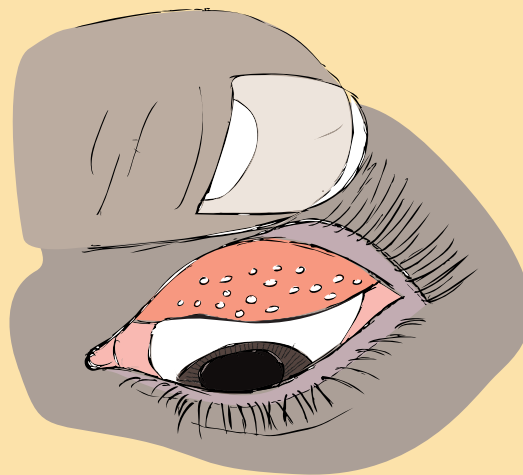
Flies can also spread trachoma, by touching the eyes or runny nose of someone with trachoma and then touching another person's eyes. *(point to second picture of flies touching the eye)*

# How can you get trachoma?

Dirty face and hands



Spread by flies



# What can be done about trachoma?

Doing some simple things can help stop you from getting trachoma: *(point to picture of Face cleaning)*

- keeping your hands and face clean every day
- using your own towel (rather than sharing with other people, even family members)
- sleeping in your own bed

It is important that health workers check for trachoma. It can be treated with antibiotic tablets or syrup. Usually everyone in the family will need to take the medicine. Jessica and Gracie will both need the medicine. So will everyone who lives in their house. *(point to picture of Antibiotics)*

If the eyelids and eyelashes have already turned inwards, and are scratching the eye, the medicine will not help. This mainly happens in older people – not children. The eye doctor can do a small operation on the eyelids to stop them scratching. *(point to picture of Surgery)*

# What can be done about trachoma?

**S**



**Surgery**

**A**



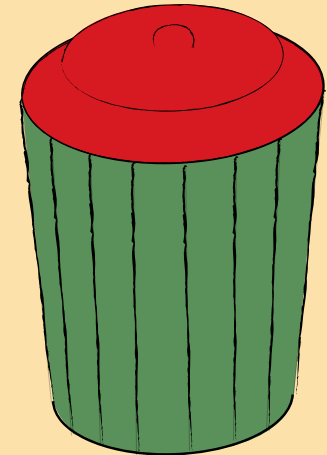
**Antibiotics**

**F**



**Face cleaning**

**E**



**Environment change**  
Tidy your community  
and use clean water

# Have you had your eyes checked?

If you start having problems with your eyes or how well you can see, make sure you get your eyes checked straight away.

People with diabetes should get their eyes checked every year.

Everyone should get their eyes checked every two years, to make sure their eyes are healthy.

You can get your eyes checked by

- an optometrist (eye glasses doctor)
- an ophthalmologist (eye doctor)
- a nurse
- or a Health Worker

Ask your health worker about eye checks in your community.

# Have you had your eyes checked?

Get your eyes checked...



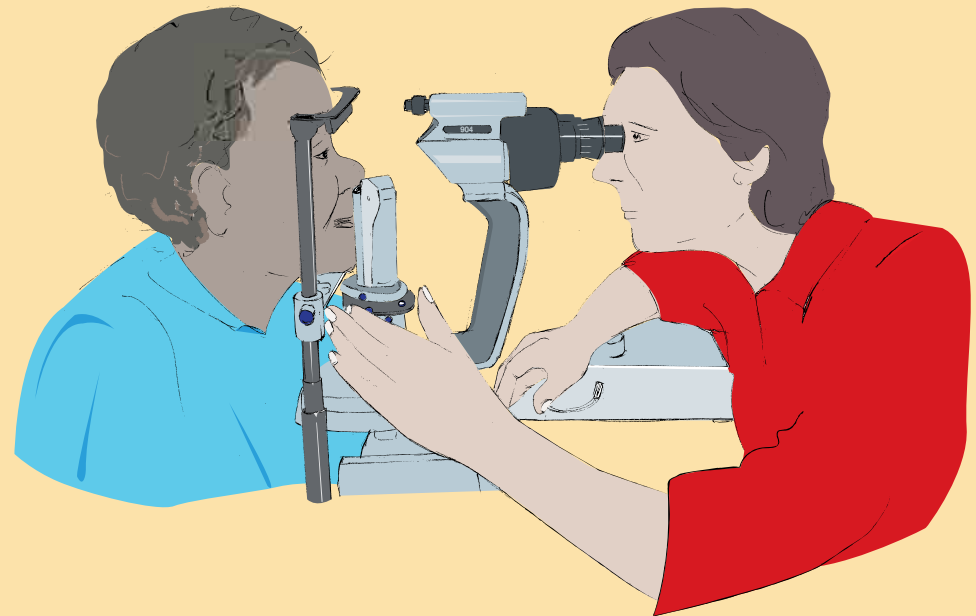
straight away, if you start to have problems with them



every year, if you have diabetes



every two years, to make sure they are healthy



# Hazy eyes story

This is Joe. Why does he look so sad?

Joe loves to drive his car into town to visit his grandkids. But about a year ago, Joe started feeling unsafe driving.

Car lights looked too bright and things started looking all hazy and smoky. Now, Joe doesn't drive at all.

Because he can't visit his grandkids, he is feeling sad.

# Hazy eyes story



# What is a cataract?

Why do things look bright and hazy to Joe? He has cataracts.

The lens inside the eye must be clear for a person to see well.

A cataract is clouding of the lens inside the eye. It is not a growth on the eye. *(point to picture of eye cross-section and cataract)*



*This is when it may be useful to look at the model eye.*

When somebody has a cataract, the pupil (the round hole in the coloured part of the eye) might look a little grey or white. *(point to picture of eye with grey pupil)*

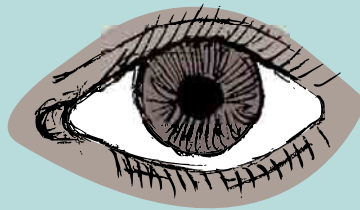
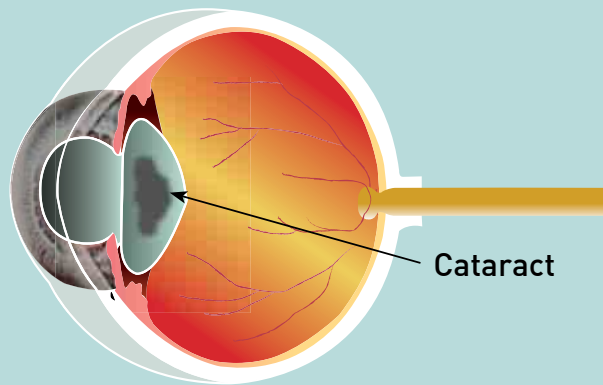
As the lens gets cloudier, things look more blurry and hazy. Some people say it looks 'smoky'. So rather than seeing clearly like this *(point to first photo)*, Joe sees things all hazy like this *(point to second photo)*. People with cataracts sometimes close their eyes in bright light.



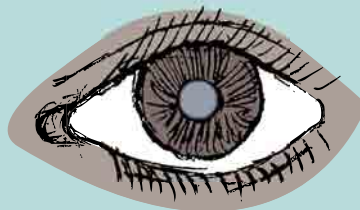
*This is when it may be useful for your patient to try on the "vision with cataract" mask.*

# What is a cataract?

Cataract is when the lens inside your eye becomes cloudy.



Normal vision



Vision with cataracts

# What causes cataract?

Cataracts are a normal part of getting older. They are most common in men and women over fifty years.

If you spend a lot of time in the sun without wearing a hat or sunglasses, or if you smoke cigarettes, you are more likely to get cataracts sooner. *(point to pictures of sun and smoking)*

Joe is sixty-five, and worked in the sun as a stockman his whole life.

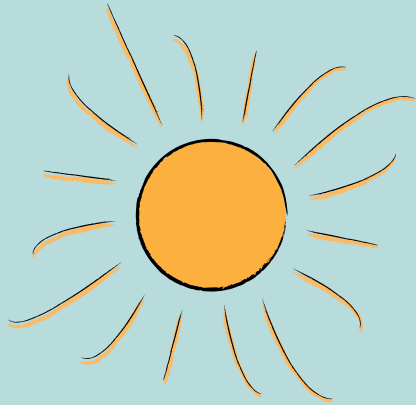
People with diabetes are also more likely to get cataracts. *(point to diabetes picture)*

Sometimes you can get a cataract from an injury to your eye. *(point to injury picture)*

# What causes cataract?

Cataracts are usually a normal part of getting older

Cataracts can also be caused by...



Lots of sun



Diabetes



Smoking



Injury

# How can we stop cataracts?

Most cataracts happen as part of getting older. But you can stop getting cataracts early if you wear a hat and sunglasses and stop smoking. *(point to pictures of lady and smoking)*

If you have diabetes, you can slow down the start of cataracts by watching what you eat, exercising, checking your blood sugar, and taking your medicine. *(point to pictures for controlling diabetes)*

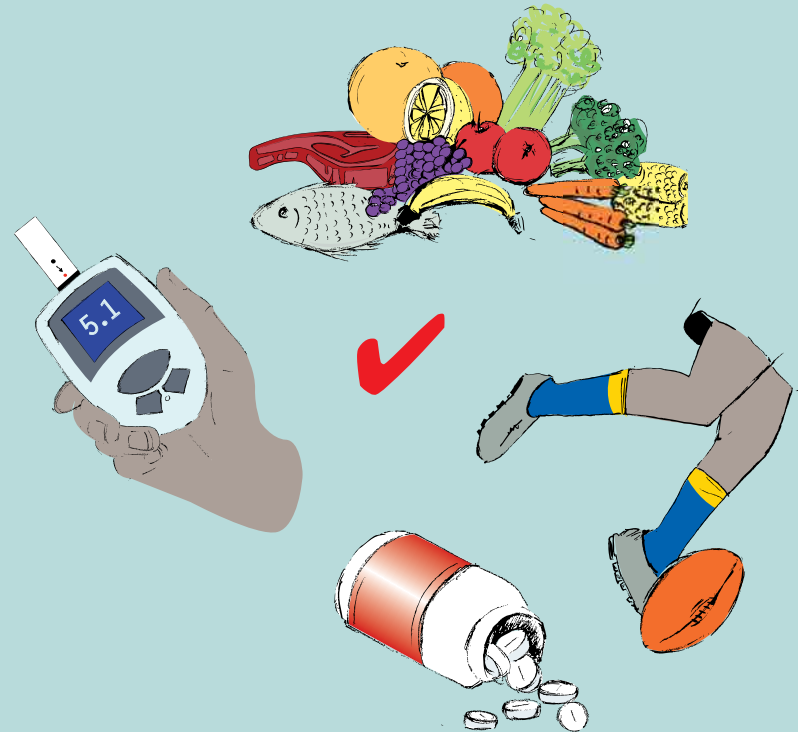
# How can we stop cataracts?



**Wear sunglasses and hats from the time you are young**



**Stop smoking**



**Control diabetes**

- Eat good food, exercise
- Check your blood sugar
- Take your medication

# What can we do about it?

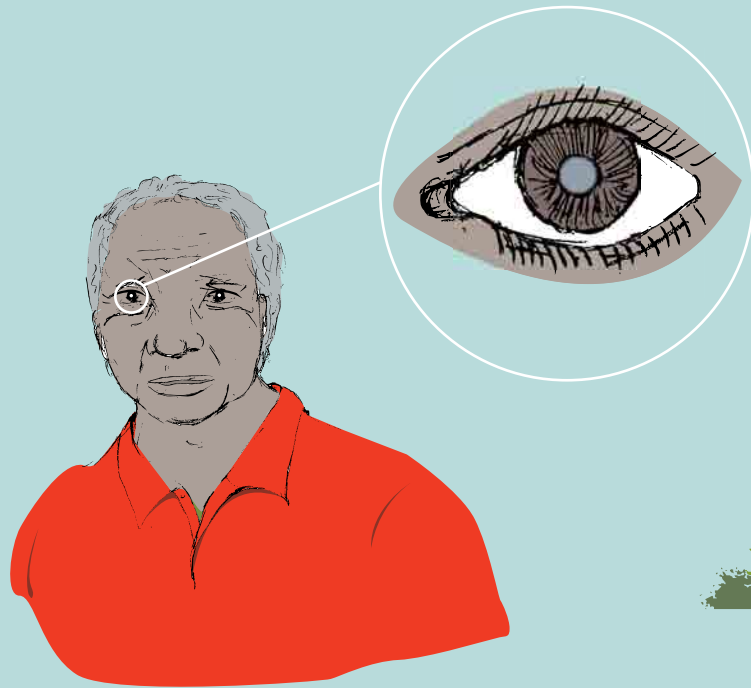
Joe went to the clinic to have his eyes checked. The nurse found that he had cataracts, so Joe saw the eye doctor. The doctor told Joe he could help him see better again with an operation. *(point to first picture)*

A cataract can be taken out of the eye during an operation, which is easy and not painful. Most people with cataracts have this operation, where they go to hospital for just one or two days. If the hospital is nearby they do not need to stay over. *(point to second picture)*

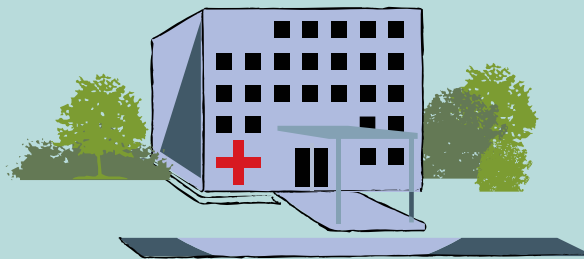
In the hospital, the eye doctor gave Joe a needle so he wouldn't feel anything. Joe lay down and the doctor took out the cataract from his eye and put a new lens in. After the operation a pad was put on the eye. *(point to third picture)* **When this is taken off by the doctor, he should see well again.**

The operation only took a short time, and Joe did not have to stay in hospital at night.

# What can we do about it?



Joe has a cataract and needs an operation



The eye doctor does the operation at the hospital



After the eye patch is taken off he should see clearly again

# After the cataract operation

After the operation, Joe had an eye patch put over his eye for a day or so to keep out the dirt and germs. *(point to first picture on top)*

The nurse reminded him not to rub his eyes and to try not to bend over. *(point to second picture on top)*

Joe put eye drops in every day for about 2 two weeks to help his eye heal. *(point to first picture on bottom)*

The very next day after the operation, the eye doctor checked Joe's eye to make sure it was getting better. Joe was then able to go home to his community. *(point to second picture on bottom)*

The doctor told Joe he should tell the community nurse straight away if his eyes got very sore or red.

# After the cataract operation

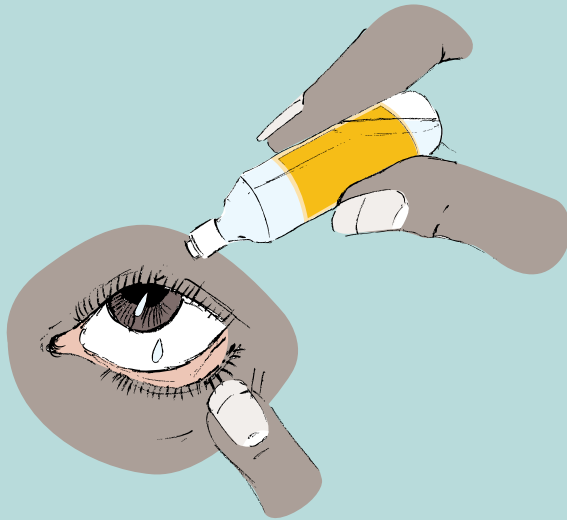
To help your eye heal you will need to:



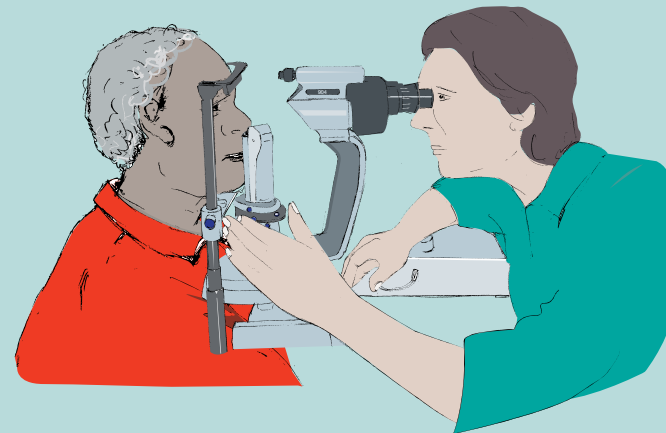
Wear an eye patch for a short time



Not rub your eye



Use eye drops every day for about 2 weeks



See the eye doctor or nurse the very next day

## Back at home

For many years, Joe had thought he would never see clearly again like when he was young.

After the operation, he was happy to go home. He could see people better and read the newspaper.

Best of all, now he could safely drive his car. So the very next week, Joe proudly went to see his grandkids again!

# Back at home



Happy after the operation



He can drive again...to  
see his grandkids

# Have you had your eyes checked?

If you start having problems with your eyes or how well you can see, make sure you get your eyes checked straight away.

People with diabetes should get their eyes checked every year.

Everyone should get their eyes checked every two years, to make sure their eyes are healthy.

You can get your eyes checked by

- an optometrist (eye glasses doctor)
- an ophthalmologist (eye doctor)
- a nurse
- or a Health Worker

Ask your health worker about eye checks in your community.

# Have you had your eyes checked?

Get your eyes checked...



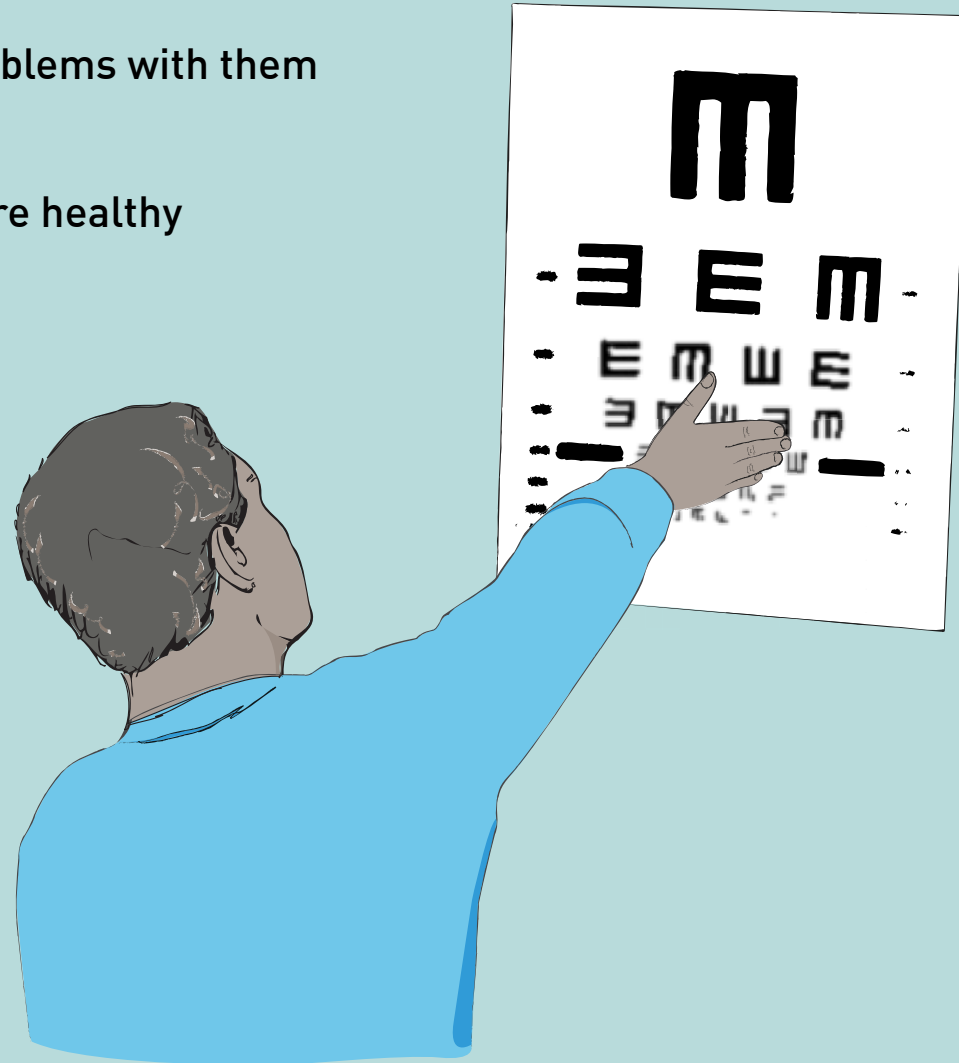
straight away, if you start to have problems with them



every year, if you have diabetes



every two years, to make sure they are healthy



# Diabetes eye trouble story

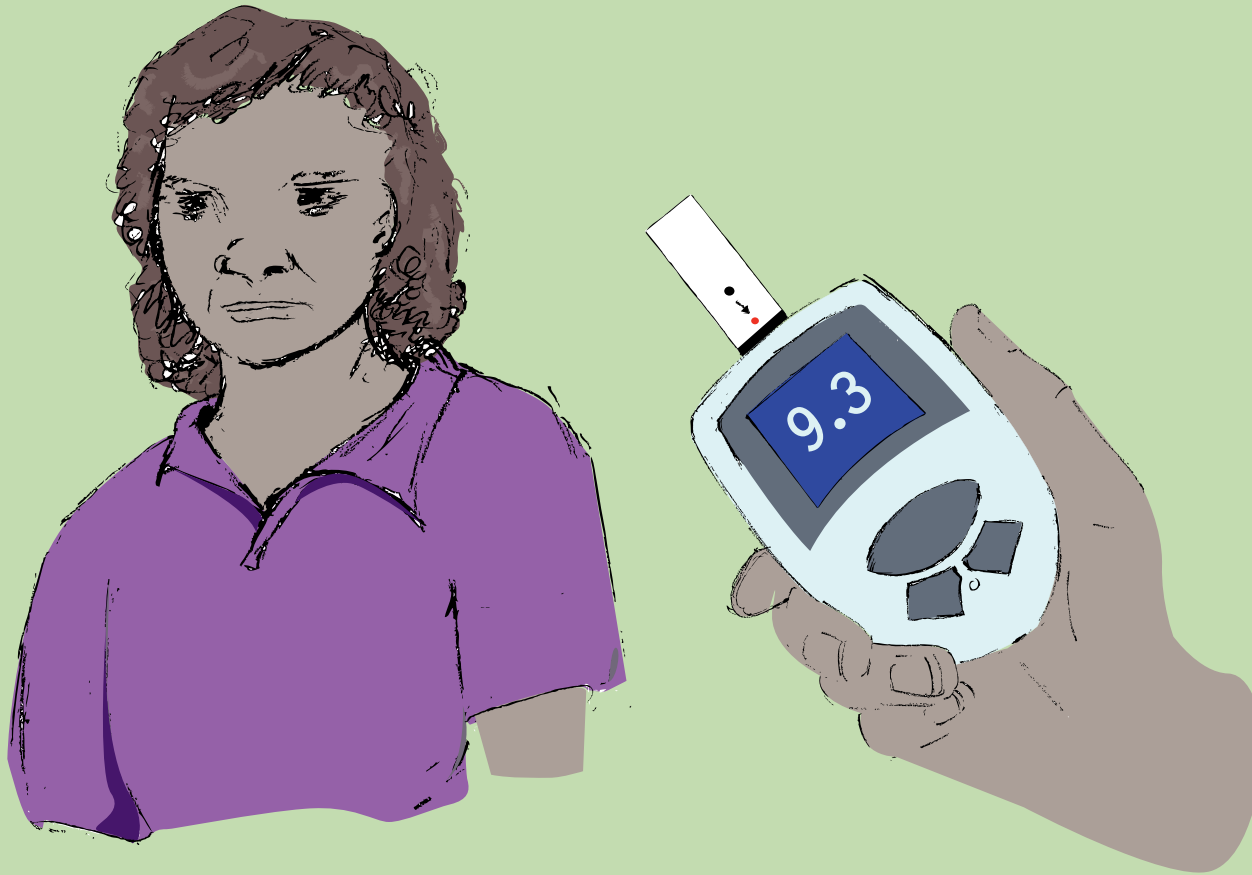
This is Linda.

Linda has been feeling sick and tired, and needs to drink water all the time. She has a sore on her foot that is not getting better, and one eye is starting to see dark spots.

Linda had a check-up at the clinic, and the nurse found she had **diabetes**.

People with diabetes have too much sugar in their blood. Lots of sugar in your blood can damage your veins, making them leak.

# Diabetes eye trouble story



Too much sugar in the blood

# How does diabetes affect your eyes?

The retina at the back of the eye has many little veins. This is a normal, healthy retina inside the eye.  
*(point to first retina picture)*



This is when it may be useful to look at the model eye.

If diabetes damages the veins at the back of the eye, they can bleed. The bleeding in Linda's eye looked like this *(point to second retina picture)*.

That is why things looked dark and blurry *(point to second photo)*. If the bleeding is bad, it can even cause blindness.

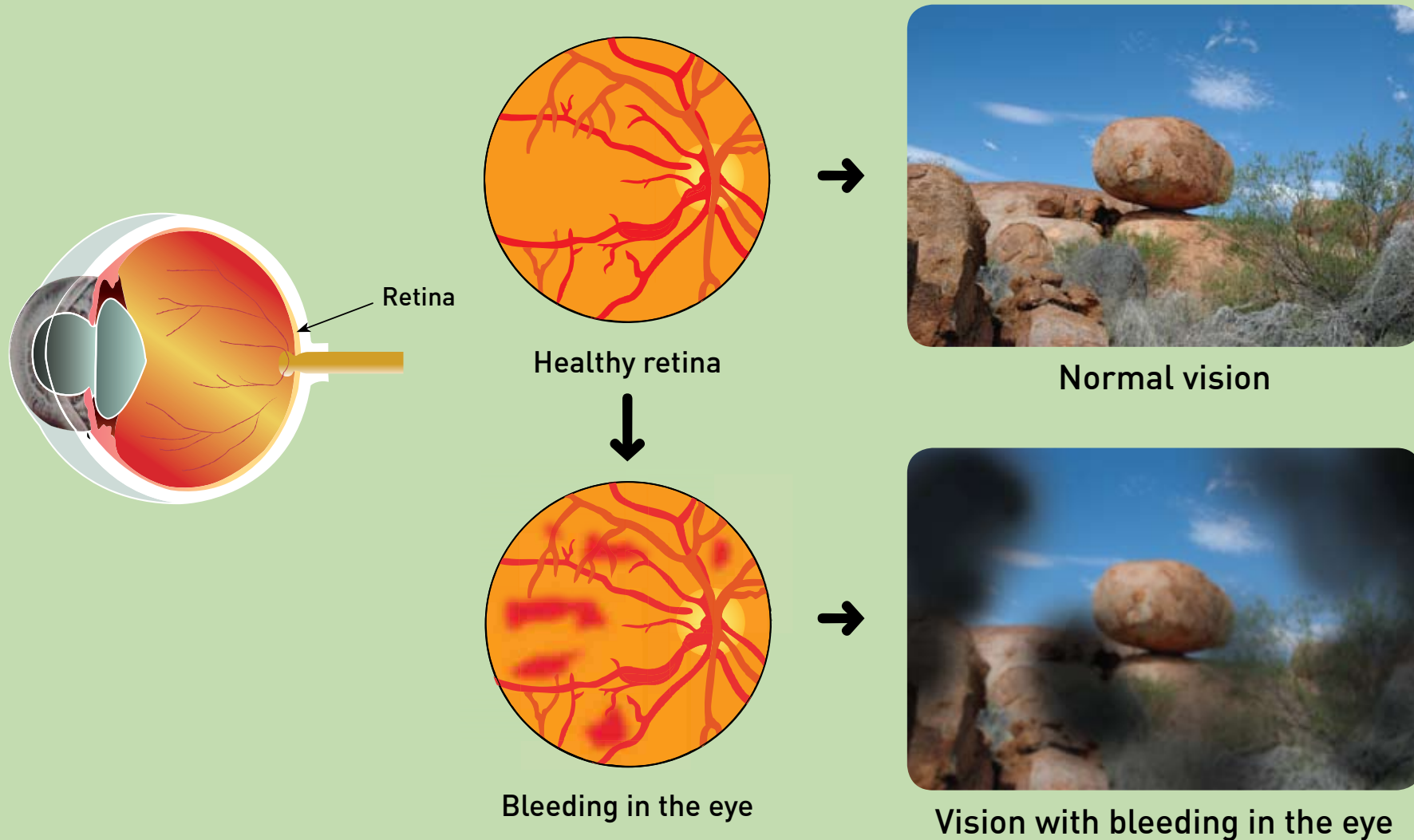
Diabetes can also cause cataract. So it is very important for Linda to look after her diabetes.



This is when it may be useful for your patient to try on the "vision with diabetic retinopathy" mask.

# How does diabetes affect your eyes?

Bleeding in the eye can make things look dark and blurry, and can even cause blindness



# How to protect yourself from it

Good control of diabetes can stop you from getting bleeding at the back of the eye.

Eating good food and doing exercise often is important. *(point to pictures of eating healthy food and exercise)*

Linda started to drink water instead of coke, eat vegetables with her dinner, and walk to the store and her work instead of driving. Checking her blood sugar levels and taking the medicine as the doctor or health worker says will help Linda control her diabetes. *(point to picture of checking blood sugar)*

Linda also needs to take her other medicine for blood pressure and cholesterol, because this can cause bleeding in the eye too. *(point to picture of medicine)*

Bleeding in the eye can be stopped if it is seen early and treated by an eye doctor. Having eye checks every year can help to find bleeding in the eye, even if you think your vision is good. It is very important to get your eyes checked straight away, if things start to look blurry or you see dark spots. *(point to picture of eye check)*

# How to protect yourself from it

Exercise



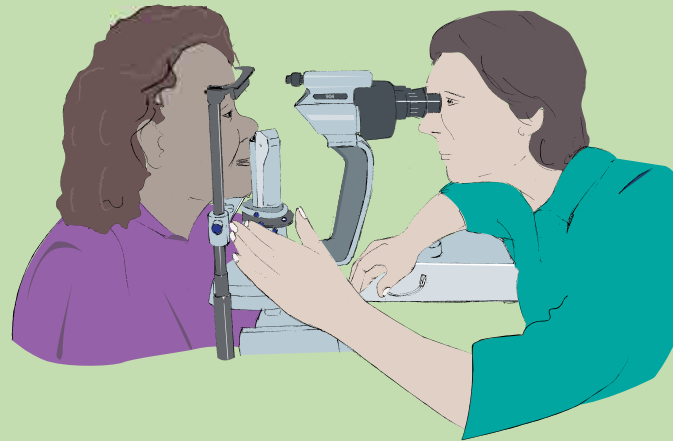
Control your blood sugar



Eat healthy food



Take your medicine



Get your eyes checked every year

# What can we do about bleeding in the eye?

Bleeding in the eye can usually be treated or controlled using a laser, which is a special type of light.

Because Linda had bleeding in her eyes, she needed to have laser, so it would not bleed more and make her vision worse.

Laser can be done at the hospital and sometimes at the clinic. *(point to picture of hospital)*

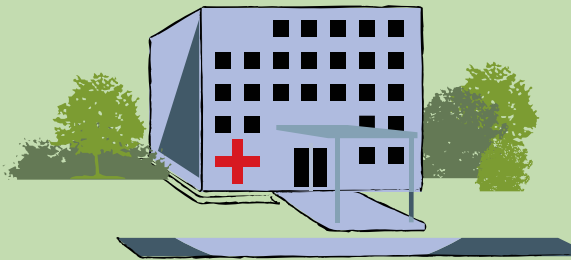
When she had laser, Linda was given eye drops to make her pupil bigger. She sat in front of the laser machine for a few minutes, saw some bright lights, then it was finished. *(point to picture of Linda sitting in front of laser machine)* Sometimes, the eye doctor needs to do more laser later to make sure all the bleeding stops.

If you have not had regular eye checks and the bleeding is bad, then sometimes you won't see better after laser, but it may stop you from going blind.

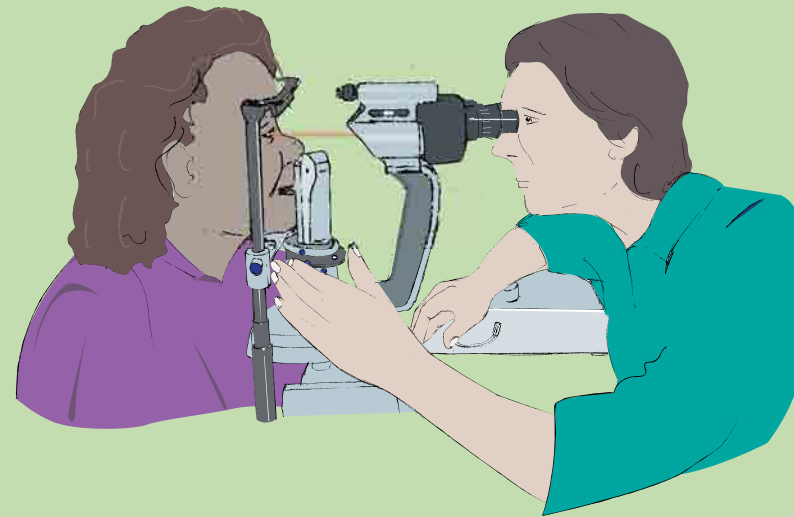
After laser, you need to keep checking if you can see well. If you see any blurriness or black spots, you should go straight to the doctor or health worker. Once you have had bleeding in the eye, like Linda, you might need to get your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least every 6 months.

# What can we do about bleeding in the eye?

Laser can stop bleeding in the eye, so it doesn't get worse.



Laser is done at the hospital or  
sometimes at the clinic



Sit in front of the laser machine  
for a few minutes

# Have you had your eyes checked?

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straight away, if you start to have problems with them



every year, if you have diabetes



every two years, to make sure they are healthy

