



Mythbusters: Diabetic macular oedema

Diabetic macular oedema is a complication of diabetic retinopathy that can lead to vision loss. It occurs when damaged blood vessels leak fluid and cause swelling of the macula.

The macula is the area of the retina that is responsible for detailed central vision.

There are many misconceptions about diabetic macular oedema. Let's bust some myths and get to the facts.

MYTH: Diabetic macular oedema always has noticeable symptoms.

STATUS: BUSTED

Diabetic macular oedema can progress significantly before you notice any changes in your vision – especially if your other eye remains unaffected. This means that relying on vision changes alone is not an accurate way of knowing if you have the condition or not.

Regular eye examinations are essential for detecting diabetic macular oedema early, before any vision loss occurs. You should also monitor for changes to your vision regularly using an Amsler grid.

MYTH: There is no effective treatment for diabetic macular oedema.

STATUS: BUSTED

Eye (intravitreal) injections are now the mainstay of treatment for diabetic macular oedema and have greatly improved the chances of preventing major vision loss, especially if the condition is caught early.

They are not as scary as they sound! Your ophthalmologist may also use intravitreal steroids or laser treatment if necessary.



MYTH: Managing diabetes has no impact on diabetic macular oedema.

STATUS: BUSTED

Keeping your blood glucose levels within your recommended target range reduces the risk of developing diabetic macular oedema and helps prevent it progressing.

Managing other factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol levels, weight, and stopping smoking can all help to slow the progression of the condition and help protect your vision.

MYTH: Diabetic macular oedema can't cause permanent vision loss.

STATUS: BUSTED

If left untreated, diabetic macular oedema can lead to irreversible damage to the macula – causing the loss of sharp central vision. Early detection and treatment can reduce the risk of permanent vision impairment.

Need more information?

Contact us today.

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