



HEALTH AWARENESS

Don't Let Diabetes Blindside You

(NAPSA)—Here's eye-opening news: The World Health Organization reports that 366 million cases of diabetes are projected by 2030. This has raised significant concerns among eye care professionals due to the effects that diabetes has on eye health. According to recent research, less than 40 percent of people identify vision problems as complications of diabetes.

In fact, diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among U.S. adults ages 20 to 74. There is a higher incidence of diabetes among minority groups, with both African Americans and Hispanic Americans nearly twice as likely to have diabetes.

"Diabetes not only affects how well people see but also how comfortable they are with their vision," says Dr. Susan Stenson, ophthalmologist. "Diabetic eyes are already compromised eyes and ocular risk factors, such as exposure to ultraviolet radiation [UVR], may increase the likelihood of developing serious, vision-threatening direct complications of diabetes, like diabetic retinopathy, and indirect complications, like cataract."

Dr. Stenson adds that some of the medications used to treat diabetes can also adversely affect quality of vision and increase the potential for UVR-related damage to the eyes.

During the early stage of diabetes, patients often experience blurred vision. Therefore, an eye care professional may be the first to detect the disease.

"Regular eye exams are important for diabetics as well as those with significant risk factors, includ-



If you have diabetes—or are at risk for it—visit your eye care professional for a complete eye exam.

ing obesity and family history of diabetes. Early detection of diabetes and prompt and appropriate therapy are the best ways to avoid complications of the disease in the eye and elsewhere in the body," says Dr. Stenson. "It is also crucial to emphasize the need for proper eye protection against such risk factors as impact-related trauma and UVR exposure, which is where eyeglass lens enhancements like impact-resistant and UVR-blocking lenses become an integral component of prescribing eyewear."

Dr. Stenson suggests that one effective and convenient solution for those diabetics who require prescription lenses is photochromic lenses, such as Transitions lenses, that block 100 percent of harmful UVR, enhance contrast, and promote visual comfort by automatically adjusting to changing light conditions and reducing distracting glare. To learn more about the impact of diabetes on eye health, visit www.Transitions.com/diabetes.