

**Evidence from the NH&MRC shows that GP screening is an adequately sensitive tool in detecting diabetic retinopathy.**

Dr Anthony Hall, Head of the Ophthalmology Unit at The Alfred, says that “a combination of testing visual acuity and direct fundoscopy will detect approximately 70% of cases of diabetic retinopathy.

If the patient has symptoms such as decline in visual acuity, or if evidence of retinopathy is found (exudates or haemorrhages), referral to an ophthalmologist is required for long term follow up, which may include retinal photography to follow progression of disease.”

Annual screening of patients with diabetes which includes testing and recording visual acuity using a Snellen chart, and direct fundoscopy to visualise exudates and haemorrhages is a valuable and sensitive tool in early detection of retinopathy.

Further information regarding guidelines for referral to the ophthalmology clinic at The Alfred, including a referral form, is available on The Alfred GP website: [www.alfred.org.au](http://www.alfred.org.au) > [For GPs](#) > [Referral Resources](#).

See also

[www.cera.org.au/publications/reports/screening\\_for\\_diabetic\\_retinopathy.pdf](http://www.cera.org.au/publications/reports/screening_for_diabetic_retinopathy.pdf)