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Titel des Beitrags: Diabetic retinopathy - ocular complications of diabetes mellitus.

Abstract: In industrialized nations diabetic retinopathy is the most frequent microvascular complication of diabetes mellitus and the most common cause of blindness in the working-age population. In the next 15 years, the number of patients suffering from diabetes mellitus is expected to increase significantly. By the year 2030, about 440 million people in the age-group 20-79 years are estimated to be suffering from diabetes mellitus worldwide (prevalence 7.7%), while in 2010 there were 285 million people with diabetes mellitus (prevalence 6.4%). This accounts for an increase in patients with diabetes in industrialized nations by 20% and in developing countries by 69% until the year 2030. Due to the expected rise in diabetic patients, the need for ophthalmic care of patients (i.e., exams and treatments) will also increase and represents a challenge for eye-care providers. Development of optimized screening programs, which respect available resources of the ophthalmic infrastructure, will become even more important. Main reasons for loss of vision in patients with diabetes mellitus are diabetic macular edema and proliferative diabetic retinopathy. Incidence or progression of these potentially blinding complications can be greatly reduced by adequate control of blood glucose and blood pressure levels. Additionally, regular ophthalmic exams are mandatory for detecting ocular complications and initiating treatments such as laser photocoagulation in case of clinical significant diabetic macular edema or early proliferative
diabetic retinopathy. In this way, the risk of blindness can considerably be reduced. In advanced stages of diabetic retinopathy, pars-plana vitrectomy is performed to treat vitreous hemorrhage and tractional retinal detachment. In recent years, the advent of intravitreal medication has improved therapeutic options for patients with advanced diabetic macular edema.