

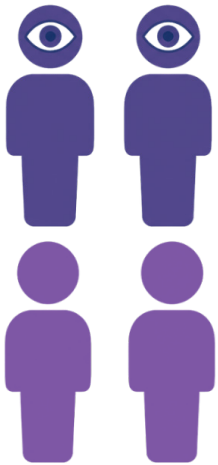


**Prevent
Blindness**
Our Vision Is Vision.

Graves' Disease and Your Eyes: What You Need to Know

What is Graves' Disease?

Graves' disease is an autoimmune disorder in which the immune system attacks the thyroid gland, and causes it to make too much thyroid hormone, a condition called hyperthyroidism. Graves' disease is the most common cause of hyperthyroidism. The thyroid hormones control body metabolism, and can cause unexpected weight loss, fatigue, increased heart rate, and feelings of irritability and anxiety.

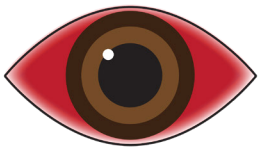


How Can It Impact Your Eyes?

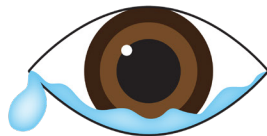
Up to one-half of people with Graves' disease develop **thyroid eye disease (TED)**. TED occurs when the immune system attacks the muscles and tissues around and behind the eyes. TED may occur in patients who already know they have Grave's disease, or it may be the first sign of Graves' disease. While related, Graves' disease and TED are two separate conditions, and each require their own treatment plans.

Eye symptoms most often begin within six months of a Graves' disease diagnosis. In its severe form, TED can last for many years, and if left untreated, can lead to vision loss.

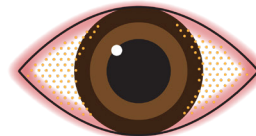
TED Symptoms May Include:



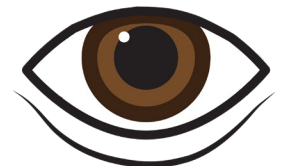
Red eyes



Watery eyes



**Dry, gritty, and
irritated eyes**



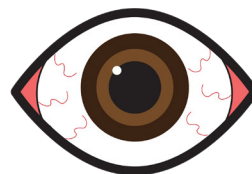
Puffy eyelids



**Pain or aching
behind the eyes**



**Sensitivity
to light**



**Bulging eyes
(called proptosis)**
and lid retraction – giving a
staring or startled appearance



**Double
vision**



What Can I Do to Protect My Eyes?

Schedule routine eye exams for early detection and ongoing monitoring of eye conditions. This can allow for earlier treatment and better outcomes. TED is managed by an ophthalmologist and other TED specialists. Any underlying thyroid problems will be managed by your primary care doctor (PCP) or by a specialist in the hormone systems of the body (an endocrinologist).

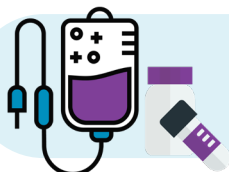
Manage Symptoms With:



Lifestyle changes: wear sunglasses and quit smoking to protect your eyes



Lubricating eye drops: preservative-free eye drops can help relieve dry, gritty and irritated eyes



Medications: pills and IV (intravenous) infusions can help manage thyroid hormone levels and reduce inflammation



Surgical options: to treat symptoms once the condition has stabilized or to relieve pressure on the optic nerve due to enlarged eye muscles



Nutrition: talk to your health care provider to see what foods and supplements may be helpful to eat more of or to avoid



Stress management: try to reduce or avoid stress whenever possible. Ways to reduce stress can include connecting with others, exercising, and getting enough sleep



Learn more. Ask questions. Protect your sight.

If you have Graves' disease, talk with your health care provider about your eye health. For additional information and free educational resources, visit Prevent Blindness. PreventBlindness.org/thyroid-eye-disease

This resource was made possible by the generous support of:

