

Fortis Hospital, Mohali :

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Awareness campaign about 'Diabetic Retinopathy' in Mohali

Shimona Kanwar, TNN

CHANDIGARH: In a bid to raise awareness about 'Diabetic Retinopathy', Fortis Hospital Mohali organized a talk for members of Mohali Senior Citizens' Welfare Association. Over 100 elderly residents attended the session addressed by Dr Mukesh Vats, the Retina Surgeon at the hospital.

Talking about the changes that occur with aging, Dr Vats said, "These alone cannot stop you from enjoying an active lifestyle or stop you from maintaining your independence. In fact, you can live an active life well into your golden years without ever experiencing severe vision loss. But as you age, you are at higher risk of developing age-related eye diseases and conditions. These include age-related macular degeneration, cataract, diabetic eye disease, glaucoma, low vision and dry eye."

Elaborating on diabetic retinopathy, the doctor said, "Since India is the diabetic capital of the world, it is even more important to pay attention to this malady. The challenge with diabetic blindness is that it can potentially affect every person suffering from the disease. It's incurable, and the ocular symptoms emerge too late. In fact, it is asymptomatic (without any symptom) in the treatable stage."

Diabetic Retinopathy is the condition when damage has been caused to the blood vessels in the retina. "At the earliest stage, micro aneurysms occur in the retina's tiny blood vessels. With the progression of disease, the some of the vessels nourishing the retina also get blocked. If undetected, the condition worsens and the blood supply to retina gets blocked and these areas of the retina send signals to body to grow new vessels. However, once these cells develop, they are fragile and abnormal. They grow along the retina and if damaged, can lead to severe vision loss or blindness," Dr Vats explained

Talking about treatment options, the doctor said, "If the disease has progressed, laser surgery in the mainstay treatment for Diabetic Retinopathy." Asking the senior citizens to go for an annual comprehensive dilated eye exam, Dr Vats said better control over sugar levels, BP and cholesterol can go a long way in preventing loss of vision.

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