

Why sight tests are important

Eye tests are an important aspect of our health and wellbeing, no matter what age we are. However, as we get older, the health aspect of a sight test becomes even more important, as our eyesight tends to change naturally so that almost everyone over the age of about 60 will benefit from the help of a pair of spectacles in some form or other. Regular visits to an optician will increase the chances of you being able to achieve the best level of vision possible, regardless of any changes that may be occurring.



The level of vision that some people are able to achieve as they get older may continue to deteriorate over time, even if they do wear spectacles, however, regular eye examinations will ensure that worsening levels of vision shouldn't necessarily prevent someone being able to lead a full and independent life.

Eye Tests and how to go about getting one

Eye tests are not just about having your vision checked for a new pair of spectacles. Many eye diseases and health conditions can be detected during a routine examination and then the necessary steps can be taken to refer the patient on for the appropriate treatment where required. Many of these conditions develop with little or no symptoms for the patient and it is for this reason that regular eye tests are so important, to ensure early diagnosis and treatment, so as to try and prevent any damage that it may have on your vision.

There are two main ways in which you can have your eyes examined. If you are mobile and are able to visit your local high street, there will normally be a choice of Opticians (or Optometrists as they are known) who will be able to offer you an appointment at a convenient time, many may even be able to offer you an immediate appointment. Alternatively, if you are housebound or because of an illness or disability, you find it hard to get out to the high street on your



own, you will be able to use a domiciliary optician's service who will come and offer you the same service in the comfort of your own home. All opticians will normally be in your phone book, local directory or Yellow Pages. If you have difficulty in finding one, you should either contact your local health authority/primary care trust or call:

- NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 if you live in England or Wales or
- NHS Helpline on 0800 22 44 88 if you live in Scotland

For everyone aged 60 or over in England and Wales and everyone in Scotland, are entitled to a free eyesight test through the NHS, even if you require an NHS Home Visit. The optician will provide a form for you to sign on the day of your examination and will also request some kind of evidence from you to confirm your eligibility.

If you are under 60 and live in England and Wales, you will normally have to pay for the examination although there are some exceptions based on levels of income. Your optician will be able to advise you on this.

Any conditions that may need further investigation that may be found during your examination, will be discussed with you and then with your consent, referred on to a suitable specialist at your local hospital, normally via your doctor.



For advice or more leaflets, please call

0800 85 44 77

or visit us online at

www.outsideclinic.com

