

Glasses and Age Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD)

Patient Information

Ophthalmology Services

Draft



The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link: <https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

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What are the reasons for visiting an optician when I have ARMD?

When you go for an eye test, the optician will assess your need for near and distance glasses. They will also assess the general health of the eye. It is essential to have these tests done regularly, especially when you have macular degeneration, as these tests may pick up other problems early, problems which could also affect your remaining eyesight.

When should I get my glasses checked?

Ideally, you should visit your optician every twelve months (as directed by your optician), to keep your glasses up to date. When you have macular degeneration, we advise that you ask your optician how much additional benefit any new lenses would give you before you decide to buy new ones. You can ask the optician to demonstrate the difference between your current glasses and the new prescription, to see if you notice the change.

Your optician may advise you that new glasses won't give any additional benefit. You should continue to wear/use your other glasses. You should also continue to go for eye examinations routinely. Remember they are also assessing the health of your eye.

Why do glasses not improve my vision?

Your prescribed glasses will help you to focus what you are seeing onto your retina; you should continue to wear these. Unfortunately, due to the macular degeneration, the central retina is not working to its full potential, and so cannot always recognise the focussed image in detail; this means you may not see to a "normal" level, but if glasses are required, they may sharpen your vision slightly. Glasses will help to focus the detail around the edges of your vision;

this is known as your peripheral vision, but it may not help as much with the central vision.

Often, your optician will tell you they can't change your glasses to make your vision any better. This does not mean you should not wear your glasses. Wearing your glasses will make the most of any remaining vision you do have.

Reading glasses

Although on their own your reading glasses may not enable you to see small detail and do close-up tasks, it is still important that you continue to use reading glasses for near tasks, as they will make a difference (just not to small print). If you are using magnifying aids, it is essential you use them WITH your reading glasses (unless told otherwise by the Low Vision Service).

I am having injections to my eyes – can I get my glasses updated?

If you are in the early stages of macular degeneration treatment, we would advise that you delay your glasses check until your condition is stable. Stable is considered as 3 visits to the macular clinic without needing an injection. If you are unsure whether your condition is stable, you can ask your macular specialist at your next clinical AMD appointment. We advise you continue to use your normal reading glasses even if you don't feel they help. If you don't have any reading glasses at present, we would advise you to buy some ready readers from your local pharmacy or equivalent, to use until you are able to go to your optician. Always be sure to ask the optician if new glasses will improve your vision before deciding whether to buy any new ones. If not, you should continue to wear your current glasses, even if you feel they don't make a difference.

I have been referred to the Low Vision Clinic; my glasses aren't any use, why do I need to take them with me?

One of the reasons for visiting the Low Vision Clinic is to be assessed for aids that may make reading and detailed tasks easier for you, enabling you to stay independent. If you do not take your glasses with you, the assessment will not be accurate. Even if you haven't got new glasses, you should take your most recent pair of distance and reading glasses (especially reading glasses).

If you do not take your glasses with you, we will not be able to:

- 1) Assess your vision accurately
- 2) Assess your detailed vision
- 3) Give you appropriate magnifiers. You may end up with magnifiers that are not the best for you, making them more difficult to use.

Even if your glasses are old, it is still important to bring them with you.

Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

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Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request.
For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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