

People with Down's Syndrome



Looking after your eyes



Version 1 - March 2011

SeeAbility Easy Read Factsheet 9

Lots of people with Down's Syndrome will need to wear glasses.



This factsheet will give people with Down's Syndrome information about eye care.

You should have an eye test every 2 years.

An optometrist or optician will give you an eye test. We will call them an optician in this factsheet.

Your doctor or optician will tell you if you need your eyes tested more often



Everyone can have their eyes checked.

Having your eyes checked is called an eye examination, eye test or sight test. We will call it an eye test in this factsheet.

You don't need to read or write to have an eye test.



An eye test can find out if your eyes are healthy.

The optician will check for illnesses like diabetes.



They will also check your eyesight and tell you if you need new glasses.



You may have problems seeing things close to you, or seeing things far away.

The optician will measure your face to check your new glasses fit okay.

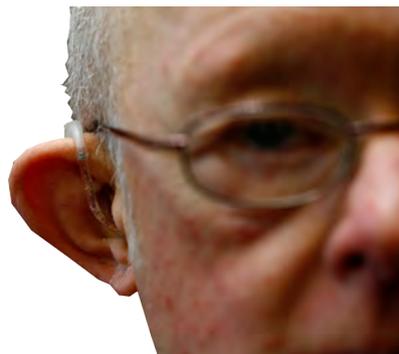
It is important that your glasses feel comfortable.



Your glasses should rest on your nose and fit well over your ears.



If you wear a hearing aid make sure that your glasses fit comfortably over your ear and hearing aid.



Make sure you can see through the clear lens of your glasses.

If you can see the frame it may be that your glasses do not fit properly.



There are different types of glasses to choose from.

You may need 2 pairs of glasses. One pair for seeing things close to you, and one pair for seeing things further away.



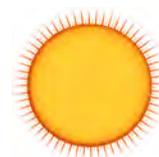
Bi-focals or vari-focals are glasses that have special lenses.

The lenses will help you see further away and close to you.



You can get glasses that help you see clearly that are also sunglasses.

Some glasses have lenses that go dark when the sun is out.



Your optician can help you look after your glasses.



You can take your glasses back to your optician if they are uncomfortable or you need to get them fixed.

They often do small repairs for free.

See our factsheets about eye care and glasses.

You can find them on our website.

Go to: www.lookupinfo.org/easyread/

Having an Eye Test

You need to have your eyes checked

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Version 2 - Nov 2010 SeeAbility Easy Read Factsheet 2

Opticians test your eyes. They are also called optometrists. We call them opticians in this factsheet.

Having your eyes checked is called an eye examination, an eye test or a sight test. We will call it an eye test in this factsheet.

You should have an eye test every 2 years.

Your doctor or optician will tell you if you need your eyes checked more often.

2011 2013

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We have factsheets about:

- Healthy eyes.
- Having an eye test.
- Choosing the right glasses.
- Getting used to your glasses.
- Looking after your glasses.

There is lots of other useful information on our website too.

Problems people with Down's Syndrome may get with their eyes.

It's not just people with Down's Syndrome who get problems with their eyes. It can happen to anyone.



Blepharitis



Some people with Downs Syndrome get sore, crusty and itchy eye lids.

- This is called Blepharitis.
- It can be painful and irritating.

Conjunctivitis



Sometimes people may get a sore, prickly and itchy eye.

- This is called Conjunctivitis.
- It can be painful and irritating.
- You can pass on conjunctivitis to other people.

Ask your doctor for help if get sore eyes.

- Blepharitis and conjunctivitis can make you want to rub your eyes a lot. This can make your eye worse.
- Hay fever and other allergies may make your eyes itch too.



A Squint



A squint is when your eyes do not move together to look at things.

- Glasses can help you if you have squint.
- If you have a squint it's important to wear your glasses.
- Talk to your optician if your squint gets worse.



Cataracts



A cataract is when the lens in your eye goes cloudy. You can get a cataract at any age.

- You can have a cataract in one eye or both eyes.
- Having a cataract makes your eyesight worse.

More information about cataracts.

- Some people with Down's Syndrome get cataracts in their 30's and 40's.
- You can have an operation to fix your cataracts.



We have two Easy Read Factsheets about cataracts:

What is a cataract?

A cataract stops you seeing clearly

See Ability

Version 1 - Nov 2010 SeeAbility Easy Read Factsheet 6

Our eyes need to be healthy for us to see well.

Inside your eye is a lens which helps you see.

Having a cloudy lens is called a cataract.

You can have a cataract in one eye or both eyes.

People often get a cataract when they get older.

It is not just older people who get cataracts. You can get a cataract at any age.

It is important to get help for your cataract.

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Having a cataract operation

The operation will help you see better

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Version 2 - Jan 2011 SeeAbility Easy Read Factsheet 7

Lots of people have cataract operations. It is a very safe operation. The cloudy lens in your eye is replaced by a clear lens. The new lens looks like this.

This factsheet tells you about having a cataract operation.

More information.

There is a film and other factsheets to help you understand about cataracts and choosing to have an operation.

- 'You and Eye' film.
- 'What is a cataract?' factsheet.
- 'Consent and capacity' factsheet.

The 'You and Eye' film and our Easy Read factsheets are on the Look Up website. Go to: www.lookupinfo.org

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- What is a cataract?
- Having a cataract operation.

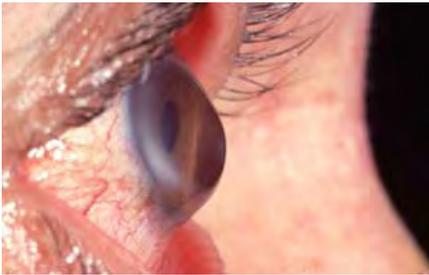
These are on our website. Go to: www.lookupinfo.org/easyread/

Tell your GP or your optician if you think you might have a cataract.

- You or your supporters may notice a change in your eyesight.
- You or your supporters may notice your eye is getting cloudy.



Keratoconus



Some people, including people with Down's Syndrome have Keratoconus.

Keratoconus is not painful.

It looks like this photo.

If you have Keratoconus:

- You may find it hard to see in bright light.
- Your eyesight can get worse quite quickly.
- Wearing glasses can help.
- Wearing contact lenses can help.



If it is hard for you to wear glasses or contact lenses you may need extra help from people to live your life.

You can have an operation for Keratoconus
People with Down's Syndrome have the same right as everyone else to have eye operations.



For more information:



About eye care and Down's Syndrome go to:

www.lookupinfo.org

www.downs-syndrome.org.uk

Designed by The Clear Communication People Ltd, email: mike@communicationpeople.co.uk. Some photosymbols used go to www.photosymbols.com



information on eye care and vision
for people with learning disabilities



www.seeability.org

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