

Minor Eye Problems?



If you have a recent problem with your eyes – such as sore eyes, red eyes or visual disturbance – you can be assessed and treated by our local Minor Eye Conditions Service.

This is a free NHS service available from a number of local opticians. See inside for more information of what conditions are covered and how to book an appointment.

What is a Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS)?

Conditions that can be seen under the service include:

- Red eye or eyelids
- Dry eye, or gritty and uncomfortable eyes
- Irritation and inflammation of the eye
- Significant recent sticky discharge from the eye or watery eye
- Recently occurring flashes or floaters
- Ingrowing eyelashes
- Recent and sudden loss of vision
- Foreign body in the eye

Please note, this is not a sight test

Also, if you have a major eye condition that is being regularly monitored by your optometrist or hospital eye service, this will not be covered by this service; for example, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma.

Where should I go?

Registered optometry practices (opticians) offering the service are listed on the back of this leaflet. An appointment will normally be required, so telephone first. Appointments are available during normal working hours and some practices offer appointment at weekends. Not all practices have an optometrist available every day, but if they don't, they will be able to find you an alternative appointment nearby.

Who is this service for?

If you are registered with a local GP you can use this free service. It is for people of all ages – adults and children. Children under 16 years must be accompanied at their appointment by an adult.

How do I book an appointment with the service?

To make an appointment, call one of the opticians on the back of this leaflet. You will be asked some questions about your symptoms in order to assess how quickly you need to be seen by the service, which will be within 24 hours in urgent cases and within a few days for routine appointments.

Please take your glasses and a list of your current medication with you to the appointment. The optometrist may put drops in your eyes to enlarge your pupils in order to get a better view inside your eyes. You should not drive until the effects of these drops have worn off, which may take a few hours.

If your condition is more serious, the optometrist will book you an urgent appointment at a hospital eye clinic. If you need a routine appointment with a hospital, the optometrist will organise this for you.

You may also be advised to make an appointment with your GP if your eye condition is relation to your general health.

