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**VISION OF
BRITAIN**

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Welcome to Vision of Britain

Sight is the sense that we value the most, yet so many of us take it for granted. Are we doing all we can to protect this vital sense and ensure our vision is the best standard possible?

Latest research, commissioned by leading eye hospital group Optegra Eye Health Care, reveals that 55 per cent of British adults would feel a lot happier if they could see more clearly.

There is a definite link between quality of vision and our quality of life. And worryingly, this is particularly apparent amongst 16-24 year olds. Whilst we read about mental health concerns for all ages, young people appear particularly at risk, and it seems vision has its role to play.

Almost a third of this age group (32.4 per cent) who wear glasses, contacts or consider themselves to have imperfect vision say poor vision reduces their confidence with socializing and meeting new people. Two thirds say they would feel happier if they could see clearly and 40 per cent say their poor vision has knocked their overall confidence.

This is backed up by medical experts as 96 per cent of optometrists and opticians surveyed said their patients can be quite distressed when poor vision affects their lifestyle.

Across all age groups, there are so many options to help people improve their quality of vision - from contact lenses and glasses, to medical treatments and eye surgery.

The key to all of this is the simple eye test. In the UK, 98 per cent of optometrists and opticians state that regular eye tests are the single most important thing to protect your vision.

The College of Optometrists recommends that you should have an eye test at least every two years or as recommended by your optometrist based on your personal eye care needs.

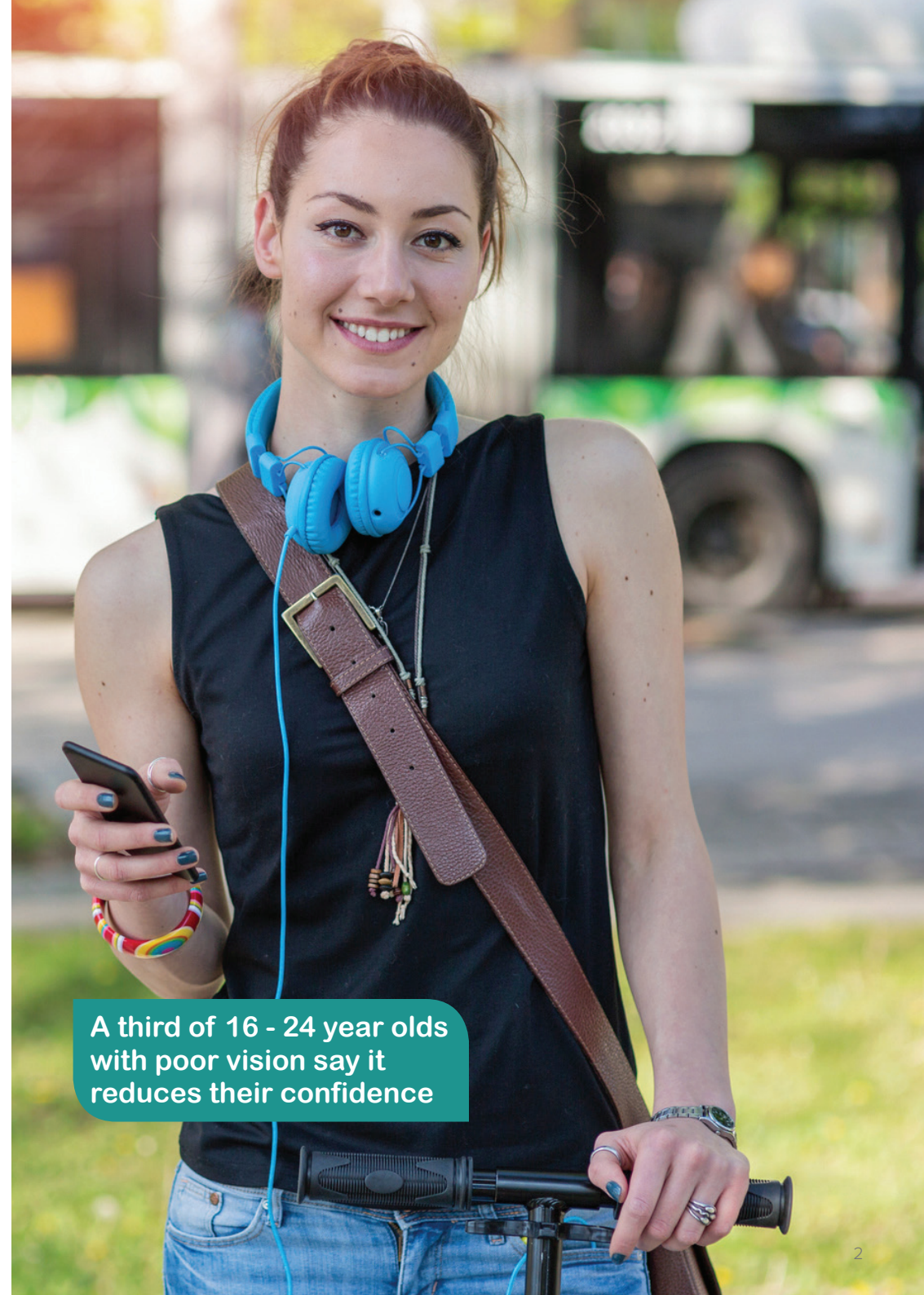
And yet, while 63 per cent of British adults surveyed are having eye tests up to every two years - as recommended - 12 per cent of 16-24 year olds have never had an eye test, 28 per cent of British adults say they just don't think about eye tests and 22 per cent say they don't have enough time for it.

Yet this simple test can keep track of your eye health and your vision, so we call on you to book that test for yourself and family members - to ensure you are seeing and living life to the full, making the most of this precious sense to help you feel good in yourself.

We hope you enjoy this report, and please ask your local optician for any further individual advice to help you see more clearly.



Peter Byloos
CEO
Optegra



A third of 16 - 24 year olds with poor vision say it reduces their confidence



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The research referred to in this report was commissioned by Optegra Eye Health Care. It was conducted independently in October 2018 by Censuswide, with 2,031 nationally representative UK adults as well as with 50 GPs and 50 Optometrists, Dispensing Opticians and Contact Lens Opticians

Patient view

RAF applicant, Bea, has latest SMILE laser eye surgery



For Mancunian Bea Hare, her dream of applying to the RAF was foiled due to very poor vision which meant she relied on glasses since she was four. But treatment at Optegra Eye Hospital Manchester has transformed her sight.

Bea, age 23, was the first person in the North West to have this third generation laser eye technology, SMILE.

SMILE stands for Small Incision Lenticule Extraction and is a bladeless, flapless, minimally invasive alternative to traditional laser surgery. It is considered the 'keyhole surgery' of laser and has been carried out over 1.5 million times.

Bea can now see with better than 20/20 vision for the first time without glasses which means she can re-apply for the RAF as she hopes to fulfill her dream of serving on the front line.

She says: “When I was told I already had better than 20/20 vision, I couldn’t believe it - that’s not really me is it?! I feel very blessed to have had this procedure, it has completely changed my life.”



British view of eye tests

Did you know?

- The NHS recommends an eye test every two years or as recommended by your optometrist
- But on average British adults have their eyes tested every three years
- One in ten never get their eyes tested
- Over a third (35 per cent) of Welsh adults have their eyes tested once or more a year; compared to 24 per cent in England, 33 per cent in Northern Ireland and 28 per cent in Scotland
- One in 10 across the UK never get their eyes tested
- Only eight per cent of us rate our eyesight as 'perfect'

Why are eye tests so important?

Are you one of the 68 per cent who know that their eye test will also spot health conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure?

Or one of the 72 per cent who appreciate their optician can spot eye disease even before symptoms?

According to GPs across the UK, this is why eye tests are so important:

- 76 per cent say eye tests are vital to diagnose a range of health conditions
- 74 per cent say they can tell us a lot about the patient's wider state of health

- 68 per cent have picked up on a serious health condition due to examining eyes

Optometrists say:

- 64 per cent of optometrists frequently diagnose an eye condition when the patient had no symptoms
- 26 per cent have diagnosed an eye condition too late to treat due to the patient delaying having an eye test

Mr Jay Bhatt, optometrist at Optegra Eye Hospital London, says:

"The eye test is one of the most important things you can do for your eyes. While we frequently schedule trips to the dentist, many of us just don't think about our eyes."

"But for all ages it is essential to diagnose any problems and treat them as quickly as possible, especially as some conditions have no symptoms."

"The eye test will also check that your day to day vision is optimal to your needs. There are so many treatment options now, we can find a solution, no matter what the eye test reveals."

Top tip!

Book yourself and family members an eye test, and maintain them routinely as advised by your optometrist. Perhaps place a reminder on your phone.

The earlier a serious eye condition is detected, the better the chances of successful treatment.



Beauty in the eye of the beholder

Our eyes not only enable us to see the world around us, but are also key to us looking good. Make-up helps many women make the most of their eyes, but do you know about the shelf life of beauty products?

Over half (53 per cent) of British women are unaware that each item of make-up has a 'best before' date from when it is opened.

Generally, each product should be discarded after:

- Mascara - 4 months
- Powder eye shadow - 12 months
- Creamy eye shadow - 6 months
- Liquid eye liner - 24 months
- Foundation - 6 months

Top tip!

Check individual products with the 'Period After Opening' (PAO) symbol. It looks like an open jar of cream and has the number of months next to it that a product is safe to use after opening. Do check as it can vary hugely from item to item.



Are your cosmetics up to date?

In reality, 55 per cent of women wear mascara over four months old, 30 per cent have make-up over five years old and 26 per cent even wear eye liner which is several years old!

While a quarter of us (24 per cent) share our eye make-up with family and friends - another no-no!

We are urging women to check their make-up bags - out with the old and in with the new! Do your eyes a favour and get rid of anything out of date and especially if it has developed a strange smell.

Also remember to thoroughly remove make-up in the evening. Leftover cosmetics may cause chronic eye irritation.

Cosmetics normally contain preservatives to help prevent bacteria growth but storing them in a hot place will make it easy for bacteria to thrive.

Get into good make-up hygiene habits by sharpening eye pencils between applications, washing brushes regularly and turning out old make-up.

Optegra's research also shows that 29 per cent of us think cheaper eye make-up is more likely to lead to infection - this is not true. All eye make-up has a shelf life, no matter what it costs, the risks are the same!

Top tip!

Have a make-up bag clear out and discard of anything you know is over the best before date. Can't remember buying it? Let it go!

Patient view - lens replacement surgery



Healthcare exec sings Optegra's praises

Brendan Jones, a healthcare executive specializing in operating theatres, has battled with poor reading vision for years. Increasingly frustrated by the daily impact of constantly taking glasses on and off, he decided to explore treatment options and experience the operating theatre from the other perspective - that of the patient.

Londoner Brendan, aged 59, has worked across many London hospitals - from advising on improving productivity, to hospital management and with all this experience, his high opinion of Optegra was praise indeed: "Everything was really efficient, within hours of enquiring I had received a call to arrange an initial appointment...and really, who would pass up a free hour and a half consultation with such a thorough examination?"



"The treatment ran like clockwork on the day, the equipment was so specialized, the staff - of which there were many - were all caring and calm and the hospital was beautiful, whilst maintaining a clinical environment. There was only the need for a few eye drops prior to the procedure and the procedure itself was fast and pain and stress free."

And as for outcomes, Brendan said: "My particular results are as good as I can imagine they could ever be!"

"On waking the morning after treatment, I quickly grabbed a magazine, not expecting to see much, but already I could easily read even the smallest of print!"

"So I went hunting around my home to further test myself and was truly amazed - I could read the tiny print on the eye drop leaflets and then went on to easily read the smallest print imaginable on the labels of bottles within my bathroom cabinet. Prior to the procedure this print would have been no more than a grey blur to me".

Brendan had been recommended by consultant eye surgeon Mr Amir Hamid to have multifocal lenses in a procedure called Lens Replacement or Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE) - where the natural lens of the eye, which hardens with age and affects focusing power, is replaced by an artificial intra-ocular lens (IOL) which is created for the specific needs and prescription of the individual patient.

Brendan is now completely glasses free: "I love that I no longer need to carry glasses everywhere I go, and can just get on with my life without thinking about specs."

"I have been involved in hundreds of IOL replacements throughout my career - but only now do I truly appreciate the huge value and impact that this brief, pain-free procedure can have. I am a huge advocate and would definitely recommend the procedure to anybody who is just fed up with wearing reading glasses."

Your safety is our priority

How we will protect you post-Covid 19 lockdown at our hospitals

Our absolute priority at Optegra – in all of our hospitals – is to protect your safety and that of our staff; and since the Covid-19 pandemic, we have made a number of changes to keep you safe. Along with our continued excellence in treatment and outcomes, your safety is our priority.

Before your appointment

Before you even arrive at the hospital, we will call you 24 hours before to run through some screening questions and ensure you do not have any Covid-19 symptoms. This is in line with Government guidelines.

Patients will be asked not to attend the hospital if they have a temperature, a persistent cough or if they – or someone they live with – is isolating.

For patients aged over 70, and those in vulnerable groups, a risk assessment form and waiver must be completed. This is assurance to you that we have considered the risks and benefits of you having treatment and that Optegra has given sufficient information to enable you to be make an informed decision about your treatment within our hospital.

We will ask all patients to come to the appointment alone, as we are aiming to limit patient numbers at any one time. Please let us know if you need to bring a carer for assistance.

Also as we are a dedicated eye clinic, there are no additional general medical patients present which reduces the volume of patients and risk of infection from others.

Appointment times will be staggered and spaced out so there are fewer other patients in reception with you.



Arriving at Optegra

We ask that you arrive only up to 5 minutes before your appointment time.

As you arrive, you will be given hand decontamination gel at the entrance and have your temperature checked with a non-contact thermometer.

If your temperature is above normal (more than 37.8 degrees centigrade) we will not be able to treat you immediately and you will be asked to return to your home. We will explain your treatment plan to you before you leave.

Please also be assured that all our staff will have their temperature tested on arrival every day and will be screened daily for Covid-19 symptoms.

You will also be given a fluid resistant surgical mask to wear for the duration of your visit and we will give you clear instructions on how to safely fit this.

When you register your arrival, please follow the social distancing markers on the floor.

Then you can take a seat in our spacious reception.



Consultation appointments

Our staff will keep 2 metres distance from you whenever possible, and those clinical team members who will need to be closer for testing will wear full PPE.

You will have your thorough eye checks on equipment that has been deep cleaned and sanitized.

Our cleaning regime will be continuous throughout each day.

For increased safety we have introduced virtual consultations as a first stage, to ensure that when you attend for your face-to-face consultation that there will be the minimum amount of contact required.

While here your consultant will keep a safe distance and will wear PPE.



Treatment appointments

On the day of treatment you will be taken straight from reception to your individual, private space on our ward.

Your pre-assessment tests will take place within this private space, away from other patients.

Before entering theatre you will be given a disposable gown to wear over your clothes, and you will be asked to decontaminate your hands again. Theatre and clinical staff will have full PPE.

After your treatment you will be taken to a recovery room for a short rest before leaving to return home.

There are no overnight stays in our hospital and our changes – such as the virtual consultation – are designed to reduce the amount of time you are in the hospital for each appointment.

If you have any questions at all, please get in touch by emailing icare@optegra.com or calling 0800 358 0825.



Vision and your outlook

Our latest research, with over 2,000 UK adults, shows a striking parallel between vision and wellbeing.

Over half (56 per cent) of adults with poor vision would feel a lot happier if they could see clearly.

A fifth say their imperfect vision makes them feel old and three in 10 (28 per cent) say it makes them feel frustrated.

One in 10 even say it makes them feel depressed.

There are particular concerns for those aged 16-24, as 66 per cent say they would be happier if they could see clearly, and four in 10 say their poor vision has knocked their overall confidence.

So what can be done to help improve our mood and our outlook? We asked Optegra eye surgeon Mark Wevill:

"There are a number of lifestyle changes you can make to help improve both vision and wellbeing."



Mark Wevill
Optegra Surgeon

"First and foremost, if you are a smoker, try to stop. Only 53 per cent of UK adults realise smoking can damage your eyesight - for your overall health and wellbeing, quitting smoking is the best thing you can do. Ask your GP or pharmacist for support."

"Diet is also important. While 54 per cent of adults are concerned about calorie intake, only 28 per cent of adults think about foods to protect sight. A simple diet change can help your vision, but 72 per cent don't know which foods are good for eyes."

"Finally, my advice is to explore your options. If your eyesight is getting you down, start with an eye test to find out exactly what your individual needs are and then explore the many, many options so you can improve both your sight and hopefully your general wellbeing also."

Eat well to see well

For great foods to fuel your sight follow the traffic light diet

Red:

Red peppers, tomatoes, strawberries, red meat (in moderation) and salmon.

The antioxidant properties of Vitamin C help prevent or delay the onset of cataract and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Red meat contains zinc which is important for the immune system and eye health; while salmon contains lots of Omega-3 to help prevent dry eyes and AMD.

Amber:

Well, orange/yellow at least! Citrus fruit like oranges, grapefruit and lemons are full of Vitamin C.

Carrots are also helpful as Beta Carotene is the chemical nutrient that assists with maintaining good vision. This is also present in other similar coloured foods like apricots, sweet potatoes and cantaloupe melons.

Green:

Kale, lettuce, spinach, broccoli, peas and the superfood avocado.

They contain important nutrients lutein and zeaxanthin, which reduce the amount of damaging light to the eye and can help reduce incidence of AMD or slow its progression.

One more essential – eggs! No matter how they are cooked, their Vitamin A helps reduce dry eyes and is crucial for good eye health.

Top tip!

If your vision is getting you down, tell your optician. Once they understand what your visual needs are and what your poor vision is stopping you doing, they can recommend the best approach.



Treatments for vision correction

Whatever your age, if your eyesight is letting you down, you have plenty of options. Your optician can advise on the best solution to suit your needs, so you look and feel good:

Glasses

Often the first port of call, an immediate fix and great way to refresh your look.

Contact lenses

Ideal for those who prefer to be free of glasses, perhaps for sports or special events. Choose from daily to monthly, reusable or extended wear lenses. Your optician will check they are the right lenses for you, that they fit well and offer advice on hygiene and use.

Laser eye surgery

Ideal for those in their 20s, 30s and 40s, this quick treatment can free you from glasses and contact lenses, by using a laser to reshape the cornea of the eye and changing its focusing power to improve your sight.

100 per cent of all eyes treated at Optegra reached 'driving test' level and 99 per cent reached 20/20 'perfect vision'. (*Figures from 1097 eyes treated)

ReLEX SMILE

The most advanced and minimally invasive laser eye surgery treatment. A bladeless form of laser eye surgery which is why no flap is required.

Presbyond

Laser vision for people with presbyopia, the age-related need to use reading glasses. It is a form of advanced wavefront laser treatment which blends vision for distance and near between the dominant and non-dominant eye, reducing or even eliminating the need for glasses.

Lens exchange

Similar to cataract surgery where the natural lens of the eye is replaced with an artificial lens, this replacement lens is tailored specifically to your needs so you can be free of glasses or contacts after a 20 minute procedure. And you'll never get a cataract!

At Optegra, following Lens Exchange and without any glasses, 91% of patients achieve 20/20 vision and 97% can read newspaper size print afterwards

Implantable contact lens

Where the contact lens is placed within your eye, between your natural lens and the iris, or between the iris and cornea. Ideal for very high prescriptions where laser eye surgery may not be suitable.

Cataract refractive surgery

If you are short or long-sighted and also have a cataract, you can fix it all in one operation. Your cloudy lens - caused by the cataract - is permanently replaced by a personalized artificial intraocular lens (IOL), rather than a standard clear lens as in regular cataract procedure. So you could be free of glasses as well as your cataract! Only 17 per cent of people interviewed knew this was an option.

For more information on all these treatment options visit www.optegra.com or call 0800 358 0825

Snooker ace hails new vision "perfect" and goes on to win World Championship

Whatever your fitness regime, or sport of choice, if you are a glasses or contacts wearer, you know the frustrations and limitations.

From swimming blind, to rubbing sweaty eyes in the gym, or trying to run with rain-dripped steamed-up specs...enough!

Turn over to read snooker star Judd Trump's story.



British sportsman and world number 1 snooker player, Judd Trump, came to realise his contact lenses were not only drying and irritating his eyes, they were literally making him lose matches.

He says:

"My vision has given me at least 30 per cent improvement in my performance. I don't have tired sore eyes anymore so I can practice more, and it is so much easier to play day and night sessions like the World Championship. I am not affected by air conditioning and lighting anymore, but before surgery I had to give up in some late matches because I knew my eyes and contacts were not up to it."

Judd, age 30, was struggling with vision and entirely dependent on contact lenses which dried his eyes and were uncomfortable in long, air-conditioned tournaments. He has taken the plunge to trust Optegra and have the eye surgery he admits he has needed for years.

He says: *"I have worn contact lenses since I was a teenager and always hated glasses, so I've put enormous strain on my eyes with long, long tournaments, in venues with air conditioning drying my eyes out – some venues are a nightmare and it's been a big stress for me."*

"In some tournaments you have to play all day and by night-time, I was still playing but with eyes that were so sore and dry from the atmosphere. There was one tournament when I had no spare lenses or drops with me, and literally could not even open my eyes anymore. They were so bad but I just had to play on knowing there was no chance I could win."

"I have really struggled. It's so important, obviously, to have the most precise vision possible as a professional snooker player, but when my eyes have dried up, been red and itchy, my vision was just so poor."

I feel that I have lost a few games because of that. I had to do something about it."

While daunted about having eye surgery, Judd knew that depending on contact lenses could get in the way of his career. He made the decision to put his trust in Optegra Eye Health Care in London, following recommendation from his manager Django Fung.

For Django, who is also a pilot, excellent results were also essential. He had chosen to have vision correction treatment with Optegra and was delighted at the ease of the process and the great result. Django felt it was a miracle that Judd had won so many tournaments with his vision as it was.

Judd went for a consultation with ophthalmic surgeon Mr. Sumith Perera at eye hospital group Optegra, who after many investigations and a thorough examination reassured him that his eyes were healthy and suitable for laser refractive surgery. This painless procedure could transform his vision. Judd was also impressed with the modern hospital and its latest technologies.

Mr. Perera says: *"Judd was short sighted and due to his profession, wearing glasses was not a good option. Although he wore contact lenses, wearing contact lenses for very long periods made his eyes sore and gritty. He was finding that his vision was getting blurry with prolonged contact lens wear affecting his performance. As his eyes were otherwise healthy he was an ideal candidate for laser refractive surgery. He has had an excellent result and now has better than 20/20 vision"*.

Following treatment, Judd describes his vision as "absolutely perfect". He says: *"I waited for years before doing this, I was just too scared, thinking what if it goes wrong? I had so much at stake! I had doubt at the back of my mind that I would never play again. It was a hard decision, but now, I think it is the best thing ever"*.

"I waited for years before doing this, I was just too scared, but now, I think it is the best thing ever."





Vision through the decades

Optegra eye surgeon Mr. Alex Shortt outlines the symptoms to be aware of at different ages:

Age	Symptoms/red flags		Treatment options	Top tips
Pre-school age children	Squint		<p>May be a sign of eye strain, not being able to focus or the need to wear glasses</p> <p>Have eyes tested to assess the possible need for glasses and/or patching</p>	<p>Specialist children's eye health experts are available</p> <p>Don't worry if your child cannot read yet, pictures can be used to assess vision</p>
School age children	<p>Rubbing eyes a lot</p> <p>Sitting too close to the TV</p> <p>Unable to see white board at school</p>		<p>An eye test will reveal if your child is short or long sighted</p> <p>Glasses can really help your child to focus in class which can have a big impact on learning, so don't delay!</p>	<p>Some schools run vision checks, but not others, so do not rely on it. Equally, a vision check at school will not check the health of your child's eyes. It is recommended that young people spend two hours a day in fresh air to help prevent short-sightedness</p>
Young adults	Straining to see small screen technology		<p>Use the 20:20:20 rule to give your eyes a break from close-up work or technology - look 20 ft away for 20 seconds every 20 minutes</p>	<p>As many young adults learn to drive, eyesight is checked as part of the driving test - a good time to get a full eye test, especially if you have not had one as a child</p>
20's - 30's	<p>Headaches or migraines</p> <p>Irritable sore eyes and itchy eyelids</p>		<p>Can be a sign of eyestrain or sensitivity to light. An eye test will spot any links and help you manage your headaches e.g. you may need to wear sunglasses more often</p> <p>Blepharitis - eyelid inflammation - is one of the most common eye conditions but there are treatments such as eye drops, cleansing pads and eyelid scrubs. It's always best to speak to your optician to ensure that you do not have an allergy or infection that needs treatment</p>	<p>This is very common. 80 per cent of optometrists have had patients with headaches or migraines who discover they need glasses</p> <p>Clean eyelids daily using specialist eye lid cleansing products from your optometrist</p>
40's - 50's	<p>Harder to read small print e.g. phone messages or menu</p> <p>Blurry vision, nausea and even sight loss or a family history of glaucoma</p> <p>Gritty, sore, tired eyes</p>		<p>The lens of the eye naturally loses its elasticity and flexibility as we age. This affects focusing power and so many people need to start wearing reading glasses at this age</p> <p>This is the age range where the first signs of glaucoma appear</p> <p>Your local optician can diagnose and treat mild to moderate dry eye. Occasionally referral to an ophthalmologist may be required for severe disease</p>	<p>Get a personal prescription and tailored glasses rather than off the shelf reading glasses - as an eye test checks your eyes are healthy too, and may reveal that you have a different prescription in each eye</p> <p>If you have a family history of glaucoma you should have annual eye tests from age 40 onwards and it's free on the NHS</p> <p>Dry eye disease is very common in this age group affecting up to 20 per cent of people</p>
60 plus	Clouding of vision or deteriorating central vision		<p>Cataract or Age-related Macular Degeneration are conditions which mainly affect older age groups. Surgery for cataract is very straight forward, and there are a range of treatments for AMD - though the sooner it is diagnosed the better</p>	<p>A specialist eye hospital can treat cataract quickly and even upgrade the replacement lens so you may no longer need glasses. An ophthalmic surgeon can also recommend various treatments for AMD. Ask your GP or optometrist for advice</p>

Short-sightedness

Short-sightedness, or myopia, is increasingly becoming a problem, especially amongst younger people.

If children are struggling to see the board at school because it is blurry, our eyes respond by growing larger and then, in fact, we become even more short-sighted.

The long-term effects of this are serious. The additional growth of the eyeball means that short-sighted people are at a significantly higher risk of glaucoma, cataract, retinal detachment and macular degeneration.

Myopia-related conditions are now the leading cause of new cases of blindness in many countries and the World Health Organization has estimated that by 2050 more than 60% of the global population (up from 29.8% in 2010) will be short-sighted.

80 per cent of GPs and optometrists agree that if it is not controlled early on eyes continue to grow and so vision problems get worse



So how can we help our children?



Dr. Clare O'Donnell
Optegra

Dr. Clare O'Donnell, Head of Eye Sciences research division at Optegra, explains: “Not only will children struggle to read easily if short sighted which may affect learning, but also, as they age they are more likely to suffer serious eye disease, so this really is an issue we should all be mindful of.

“We need to do something now to slow down this increase in myopia. Natural daylight helps, and it is recommended children should have at least two hours a day outside so encourage your kids to enjoy fresh air; and keep them away from technology screens at the same time!”

If your child is short-sighted, ask your optician for advice on how to slow its progression.

¹Reference: The Impact of Myopia and High Myopia. Report of the Joint World Health Organization – Brien Holden Vision Institute, Global Scientific Meeting on Myopia. Australia. March 2015.

I have a cataract - what are my options?

Cataract is a painless clouding of the lens of the eye which develops gradually, resulting in your eyesight getting worse over time.

Contrary to popular belief, cataracts are not caused by a film growing across your eye. Your lens is actually made up of protein and water, and cataracts occur when the protein in the lens gathers in such a way as to prevent light passing through.

It affects one in three people aged over 65 years, but is increasingly also being diagnosed in people of a younger age, even in their 40s.

You can develop cataracts in both eyes or in just one of them; however cataracts cannot spread from one eye to the other.

Symptoms include cloudy, faded vision, blurred vision, glare from lights and headaches due to eye strain.

If you have been diagnosed with a cataract you now have some options to consider in your treatment. The only treatment is an operation to remove the cloudy lens and replace it with a synthetic one.

This can be done at any point once you have diagnosed – it does not have to wait to be “ripe” as some people believe.

Within hospitals such as Optegra, there are two options – standard cataract surgery or refractive cataract surgery.

So what is the difference?

Cataract surgery is a 20-minute procedure, the most commonly performed elective surgery in the world – over 330,000 cases performed each year in England alone. It is performed as a day case.

The procedure replaces the natural lens with a clear permanent artificial lens. Any existing or future long or short-sightedness problems may still exist.

Cataract refractive surgery – this is the exact same procedure except it uses one of the most advanced technology lenses available. This allows us to replace the natural cloudy lens with a lens that can correct the prescription at the same time.

This surgery could help you eliminate or reduce your dependence on glasses at the same time as removing your cataract.

Optegra invites you to a free no-obligation consultation to discuss your personal cataract treatment options

To find out more about Optegra's treatments and what options are best for your eye health needs, book a FREE no-obligation consultation with one of our cataract surgeons who will be able to assess your individual circumstances and answer any queries you may have.

**Tel: 0800 358 0825 or visit
Optegra.com**

Your NHS cataract procedure can be performed by Optegra's expert surgeons

The NHS and Optegra Eye Hospitals are working in partnership to provide quality care to patients eligible for NHS cataract procedures.

The benefits to you:

- ✓ Reduced waiting times - you'll have your first consultation typically within 2-3 weeks
- ✓ Expert surgeons, state-of-the-art technology and caring support staff
- ✓ Your NHS procedure carried out in a dedicated Optegra Eye Hospital furnished to a five-star standard
- ✓ The treatment is entirely free to the patient - there are no additional charges at any point



What should you expect?

If you are ready and eligible for an NHS cataract procedure

1

Once our dedicated NHS team receive and process your referral, they will contact you via post or email with an appointment date

2

At your appointment, Optegra will pre-assess your eyes and will talk you through the next steps of the treatment

This gives you the opportunity to fully understand what will happen during your cataract treatment

3

After your short cataract procedure, you will go home: your optometrist will remain informed, and can help you with any ongoing care

For more information
visit **Optegra.com**



Patient view-cataract refractive surgery

Living life to the full at 84 years old with excellent new vision to boot

Artist Josie Munro has more energy than most. Even at the age of 84 she enjoys ballet classes three times a week and has so many art projects there are not enough hours in the day.

Only her eyesight was letting her down as cataracts developed, but she has now had those treated with latest technologies at Optegra which have freed her not only from the cloudiness of cataracts, but also from glasses altogether.

She opted to have an 'upgraded' form of cataract surgery where a multifocal lens is used, which means she had the chance to be free of glasses once and for all.

Josie has always loved to sculpt, draw, paint and collage, and says her home is full of her work, as well as exhibiting at solo and joint exhibitions. All of this creative flair was at risk when she noticed her eyesight was getting worse and worse.

"With my art, it was very difficult working from a model as my distance vision got worse, and my eyes no longer adequately even worked for close vision. It was very frustrating!"

"I find it so frustrating even as you go to the supermarket and want to see use-by date and ingredients and having to put glasses on and off all the time. I had glasses but the lenses fell out four times!"

"This urged me to have the operation done and I went to three different hospitals but got a different opinion from each."

"One said the operation would improve my near vision, another it would only improve distance – I thought, either they do not have the facilities or do not know now what they are talking about!"

"Then I saw an advert for a free open evening at Optegra, and thought there was no harm going along."

"After the talk I spoke to the surgeon, Mr Muen, I asked if I could I get what you are offering on the NHS but no, they do not do it – only a regular cataract procedure. This operation at Optegra meant that I could have a special lens so I could see well at various distances. Luckily I had just sold one of my paintings, so I decided to go ahead."

Surgeon Mr Wisam Muen, said: "Josie is such a great character and so full of enthusiasm for all her art – she is so busy, so creative, it would have been so sad for this to be curtailed by poor vision."

"I am delighted that the treatment was such a success and she can continue her art and ballet without the hassle of glasses which she had worn for over 20 years."

As for her vision now, Josie says: "It is wonderful! I woke up the next morning and looked all my paintings on my bedroom wall – the colours were glowing!"

"Even my life drawings which are mostly charcoal on white paper, even they looked so much better and really stood out. I am delighted and feel inspired, I can now get going with my art again!"

Debunk the myths: cataract surgery

Optegra is the only eye hospital group to offer free, no-obligation consultations for cataract patients – come along and discuss your options with a leading eye health expert.

- Cataracts affect one in three adults aged over 65 years
- The cure is a straightforward procedure
- This is the most commonly performed elective surgery across the NHS - with over 330,000 operations a year in England alone.

Yet some are put off treatment due to myths... so let's put the record straight!

Top tip!

Don't be one of the 81 per cent of over 55s who has been told they have a cataract but that it is not yet time for it to be treated. Call Optegra on 0800 358 0825 where you can be assessed in days and treated within weeks.

Myth: You have to wait for the cataract to be 'ripe' before surgery

Fact: You can have cataract surgery at any point, and as soon as it starts affecting your vision, so do not delay. It is well documented that the NHS can have waiting lists, so ask your optician to refer you as early as possible, or explore options at private hospitals such as Optegra, where you can be reviewed and treated within weeks.

Myth: Cataract surgery is painful.

Fact: Many say that going to the dental hygienist is more painful. During cataract surgery you have local anaesthetic to numb the eye and all you will feel is a little pressure once or twice.

Myth: The whole eye has to be removed to fix a cataract.

Fact: This is actually impossible! The eyeball is firmly held in place with muscles and during cataract surgery, only the lens is removed.

Myth: The cataract op involves an overnight stay in hospital.

Fact: The procedure takes just 20 minutes per eye and is carried out as a day case.

Myth: A cataract covers the whole eyeball.

Fact: A cataract is a natural clouding of the lens within the eye, which lies behind the pupil and iris; it is a similar size to a penny.

Insight to genetics and eye health

Our new research shows that over a quarter of British adults (27 per cent) do not realise they should have regular eye tests if a family member has glaucoma.



So how many eye conditions are hereditary? Will you be short sighted if your parents are?

Optegra eye surgeon, Mr Shafiq Rehman, shares this advice:

"The main eye conditions which have strong genetic links are Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) and glaucoma. Both of these can have a huge impact on quality of life, so it is vital that they are identified at the earliest stage possible.

"In fact, if you are 40 years or over and your mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter has been diagnosed with glaucoma, you can have free eye tests.

"As for myopia and hyperopia there is a hereditary component to these conditions - in simple terms two short-sighted parents means stronger chance of children being short-sighted too.

"There are many other much rarer inherited conditions also, and very best advice to give is to maintain regular eye examinations at the time intervals recommended by your optometrist."

If a family member has AMD or glaucoma, be aware of these symptoms, and visit your optometrist immediately if you notice these signs:

AMD warning signs:

- slight blurring of central vision
- hard to see fine detail
- trouble clearly identifying images or faces as they become distorted in the centre
- hard to distinguish between two similar colours
- struggle to adjust to different lights
- lose ability to judge distances e.g. length of step when walking, which may cause falls

Glaucoma warning signs:

- difficult to spot as symptoms are very gradual
- reduced quality of vision e.g. hard to read street signs in dim light
- appearance of rainbow colour circles in bright lights
- blurry vision and redness
- loss of peripheral vision over time
- pain within eye which can cause nausea and vomiting

Top tip!

The most common form of glaucoma - 'open angle glaucoma' - is known as the "silent thief of sight" as there are no symptoms or early signs...so it is crucial to have an eye test every 1-2 years.

A world-renowned and thriving medical community. Prestigious establishments offering leading healthcare treatment. World class surgeons and excellent outcomes.

Optegra Eye Health Care is a specialist provider of ophthalmic services in the UK, Czech Republic and Poland. It operates 21 eye hospitals and clinics, bringing together leading edge research, medical expertise and state-of-the-art surgical equipment. Its top ophthalmic surgeons are renowned for their areas of expertise, offering excellent clinical outcomes.

For more information please visit [Optegra.com](https://www.optegra.com) or call 0800 358 0825



Optegra Locations

We have dedicated eye hospitals in the following locations:

- ✓ Central London
- ✓ North London
- ✓ Manchester
- ✓ Yorkshire
- ✓ Surrey
- ✓ Hampshire
- ✓ Birmingham
- ✓ Altrincham (Clinic)
- ✓ Leeds (Clinic)

Optegra eye hospitals are dedicated only to eye surgery:

- Access to 155 eye consultants
- No waiting time
- Options to enjoy life without glasses
- Treatments not available on the NHS

