

Ophthalmology – Cataract Surgery

Introduction

Cataracts are when the lens of your eye, a small transparent disc, develops cloudy patches. If your optician has confirmed that you have cataracts you will be referred to a specialist eye doctor for an assessment. Cataract surgery involves replacing the cloudy lens inside your eye with an artificial one. At the assessment your doctor will discuss cataract surgery with you in detail and whether this is the right option for you.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

Guidance for Patients

It is important that while you are waiting for your surgery you remain as active and as medically fit as possible. If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure you should get this reviewed at your Doctor's surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health. If you are a current smoker, it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping, advice can be found at your local pharmacy or Doctor's surgery or via the Oxfordshire Stop smoking service.

Oxford University Hospitals has a dedicated free health and wellbeing support service called Here for Health for staff, patients, their families, and visitors at OUH.

Here for Health forms part of the Trust's Clinical Support Services and offer holistic health and wellbeing information and support for patients as part of their care pathway. [Here for Health - Oxford University Hospitals \(ouh.nhs.uk\)](https://ouh.nhs.uk/here-for-health)

Here for Health focuses on what matters to you and offer a range of support methods to help you plan for:



- giving up smoking
- becoming more active
- eating a healthy diet
- reducing alcohol intake
- self-care for general wellbeing
- managing weight.

We tailor your consultation to your individual needs, to make it as easy as possible to adopt small, sustainable, and realistic lifestyle changes to improve your health and wellbeing.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

We have a wide range of resources and can help you access a variety of community services, including free stop smoking and weight management support. **01865 221429** hereforhealth@ouh.nhs.uk

NHS websites

The NHS website Live Well provides advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing. [Live Well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Healthy changes start with little changes. Whether you want to lose weight, get active or quit smoking, Better Health is here with lots of free tools and support. [Better Health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Oxfordshire Services

To support local Oxfordshire residents to stop smoking or lose weight, [Stop Smoking In Oxfordshire, Quit Smoking Today - Stop For Life Oxon](#) and [Home | Weight Loss Support | Achieve Oxfordshire](#) have been commissioned to provide free stop smoking and weight management support to the Oxfordshire community.

Stop Smoking Service

[Stop Smoking In Oxfordshire, Quit Smoking Today - Stop For Life Oxon](#)

Stop for Life Oxon has been created to help you quit smoking in Oxfordshire through our free three-level support service **0800 122 3790**

If you are not ready to quit just yet but would like more information on how to protect your family, **Smoke free Homes**, advises on how to make your home and car smoke free.

Weight Management Service

[Home | Weight Loss Support | Achieve Oxfordshire](#)

Achieve Healthy Weight Loss Oxfordshire is funded by [Oxfordshire County Council](#). We have partnered with leading weight loss providers to offer you a range of FREE programmes to help you achieve your goals. We also have valuable tools and skilled Health Practitioners to give encouragement throughout your weight loss journey.

ACHIEVE INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Inclusion:

- Oxfordshire resident, working in Oxfordshire, studying in Oxfordshire or registered to an Oxfordshire GP surgery
- You must be over the age of 18
- BMI greater than 30 **OR** greater than 27.5 with a comorbidity **OR** greater 27.5 if you are from a Black, Asian and Minority (BAME) community **OR** greater than 23 if you are from a BAME community and have a comorbidity. [Scroll down to use our BMI checker](#)

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Exclusion:

- You must not have accessed a free service via Achieve Oxfordshire in the last 12 months
- You must not have been a paying member of Slimming World or Weight Watchers in the last 3 months

Unfortunately, we are unable to support you via one of our services if any of the following health statuses apply to you:

- Complex diabetes*
- Known eating disorder - Other mental health conditions will be considered on a case by case basis
- Currently pregnant

[*Click here to view our full list of eligibility criteria](#)

To check your BMI, please click on the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/>

Being Active

There are lots of ways to get or keep active across Oxfordshire including walks and cycle routes as well as activities suitable for families and older people.

[Ways to Get Active | GO Active \(getoxfordshireactive.org\)](#)

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Cataracts generally cause a gradually progressive reduction in sight, any sudden reduction in sight or other symptoms such as flashing lights, floaters, a localised blind spot/shadow in your peripheral vision, distortion of your central vision particularly when looking at straight lines or redness or pain in your eyes would not be caused by cataract. If you experience any of these symptoms while waiting, you will need to seek help soon from your GP or optician.

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

GP surgeries

GP practice staff are also helping patients to manage their conditions at home while they wait for hospital appointments.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic and GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

When you phone or use an online form to contact your GP surgery to make an appointment, you will be asked some questions which are designed to help staff guide you to the most appropriate clinical person to help you with your condition. This could be a nurse, clinical pharmacist, physician's associate, GP or paramedic.

Contact Us

Please use the following email address for My Planned Care enquiries: pals@ouh.nhs.uk