

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Ophthalmology – Waiting well

Introduction

Ophthalmology is a specialty focussed on the diagnosis, management, and prevention of problems with the eyes and visual system using medical and surgical skills. If you are on the waiting list to be seen by a member of a clinical team at the Bristol Eye Hospital or its outreach services, there are some things you can do in the while you wait for your appointment.

Guidance for Patients

Outpatient appointments

The Bristol Eye Hospital continues to carefully prioritise all patients. This means the clinical teams assess the impact of any delay you are experiencing, and care is prioritised for those patients at greatest risk.

If you are waiting for your first outpatient appointment and your vision becomes significantly worse, please contact your GP to let them know.

Cataract surgery

Delays in providing routine surgery could mean that your wait for cataract surgery may be extended. This is unavoidable, but please be assured that cataracts do not cause permanent loss of vision and delay in surgery does not put your vision at risk permanently.

Coping with poor vision while waiting for surgery is challenging. If you are troubled by reduced vision due to cataracts, consider a few small changes while you await your surgery

Lighting: improved lighting directed onto a task can make a huge difference. Avoid bright unshaded lights as these may result in glare. Sit with your back to the window while reading to make the most of the sunlight. Talking book services are available if reading is too difficult or tiring.

Magnification: magnifiers can be helpful while reading small print or mobile devices.

TV audio description: describes what is happening on the screen so you do not miss any important details.

Extra help: Try to secure your home against potential trip hazards such as rugs and uneven surfaces. Speak to your pharmacist if you are struggling to see medication packages

Other good sources of information include

<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-hospitals/bristol-eye-hospital/>

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/advice>

<https://www.macularsociety.org/support/advice-information/>

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The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by the Surgery Division Executive Group of University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS FT.

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What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

GP surgeries are still open

Please contact your GP surgery for advice if you feel your condition is deteriorating.

GP surgeries are still open but may be working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. GP practices are utilising telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

GP surgeries can contact Bristol Eye Hospital for advice if needed.

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.