

Top Tips

Caring for someone's Eye Health

Introduction

Eyes are an important part of someone's health.

There are many things that can be done to keep them healthy and make sure their sight is functioning at its best.

Below are some useful tips on caring for someone's Eye health

- 1** If someone already wears glasses, make sure their prescription is current and their spectacles are worn for the purpose they were prescribed e.g. reading glasses for reading and not for example walking around as this could increase risk of a fall. The majority of people over the age of 55 will require either reading or distance spectacles
- 2** Everyone should have regular sight tests, whether this is from a domiciliary provider (an optician that visits the Home or care home) or a carer or relative taking them to an optometrist in the community. Sight tests are recommended at least once every two years, sometimes more frequently depending on the Optometrist's advice.
- 3** Sight Tests are free for people aged over 60 and those who receive a guarantee pension credit or another benefit may be entitled to NHS vouchers towards the cost of spectacles.
- 4** Regular Sight Tests aren't just about being able to read; they can also help picking up disease, helping people recognise faces and see to eat their food.
- 5** They should also be made aware that smoking can also cause sight threatening eye disease.
- 6** If someone has Glaucoma they need to regularly administer eye drops 'eye drop compliance'. Guidance on this can be found on the following website www.myeyedrops.info
- 7** There are voluntary sector organisations that can help with advice and support for their sight loss, Insight Gloucestershire - <http://insight-glos.org.uk/>, Forest Sensory Services - www.forestsensoryservices.org, Macular Society - www.macularsociety.org, International Glaucoma association - www.glaucoma-association.com Talking newspaper - www.tnf.org.uk.
- 8** Anyone is also able to access websites like 'Gadget and Go' <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/disabilities/adapting-your-home/> and www.glosequip.co.uk these websites have self-assessment forms and the facility to support the purchase of equipment to help with sight loss.
- 9** Sore sticky eyes can be a common complaint. To prevent spread of infection make sure they have and use their own clean towels and flannels and are encouraged to clean their faces and eyelids daily. Treat sticky eyes by diluting baby shampoo in boiled and cooled water and using cotton wool to clean the eyelids and lashes morning and evening.
- 10** Being overweight or obese increases the risk of developing diabetes and other systemic conditions, which can lead to vision loss, such as diabetic eye disease or glaucoma. If someone is having trouble maintaining a healthy weight, talk to their GP.
- 11** Anyone with diabetes should have a yearly retinal screening with the Gloucestershire Diabetic Eye Screening Programme. Drops will be instilled in the eye to open up the pupil to allow a photograph to be taken of the retina, at the back of the eye. This procedure is painless but could prevent blindness if retinal changes are seen early enough. Contact details can be found on the following website <https://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/diabetic-eye-screening/>