

Patient information factsheet

Visual field test

A visual field (VF) test charts how wide an area you can see and how sensitive your vision is within this area. If your eyesight is variable, or you are having treatment, then serial testing over a period of time may be able to monitor your progress.

The test may be similar to one of the tests you may have had at your opticians, but it is not designed to see whether you need glasses. The visual field test assesses whether your vision is being affected by the function of the eye, nerves and brain, rather than how well your eyes focus.

You have been sent an appointment for your test and we have provided the following information so you know how to prepare and what to expect.

Attending your appointment

Please ensure you arrive on time and allow at least half an hour for the test. If you arrive late it may be necessary to rebook your appointment.

If you wear glasses it is important that you bring them with you as this could affect the final result. You should bring both reading and distance glasses if you have them. Basic lenses are also available in the test room and the person performing your test (physiologist) may use one of these to improve your responses if appropriate.

During the test

You will be asked to read some letters or numbers from an eye chart about six metres away. A patch will then be placed over one eye and the room will be darkened.

You will be asked to look forward and press a buzzer when you see a spot of light. The spot of light appears randomly from many different angles and is altered in size and brilliance to obtain a detailed map of your vision. This will then be repeated with your other eye.

The test is not designed to assess whether or not your vision is good enough to drive. You must consult your doctor or optician about this.

After the test

The person performing your test will not be able to give you your results immediately after the test. The results will be sent to the consultant who referred you for the test.

Further information

Please feel free to contact the department if there is any information you do not understand. If your appointment is not convenient please phone as soon as possible to rearrange it.

Clinical neurophysiology department

Wessex Neurological Centre
B level, Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD

Telephone: 023 8120 6785 (between 8am and 4.30pm, or please leave a message on the answer machine).

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.