

# People with Down's syndrome



## Looking after your eyes

**SEE ABILITY**  
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Easy read factsheet



**Lots of people with Down's syndrome will have eye problems**



This factsheet will give people with Down's syndrome information about eye care



Opticians test your eyes

They are also called optometrists

We call them opticians in this factsheet

2019

2021

You should have an eye test every 2 years. Your optician will tell you if you need your eyes tested more often



## Everyone can have their eyes checked

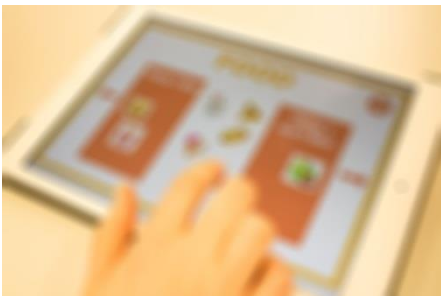
Having your eyes checked is called an eye examination, sight test or eye test. We will call it an eye test in this factsheet

You don't need to read or write to have an eye test

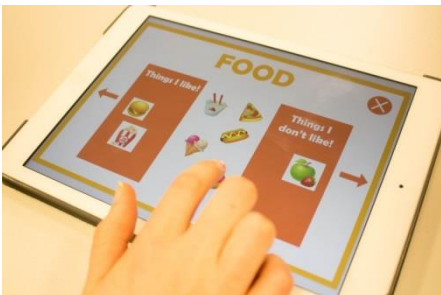


## An eye test can find out if your eyes are healthy

The optician will check for health problems like diabetes



You may have problems seeing things clearly



You may need glasses to see things clearly



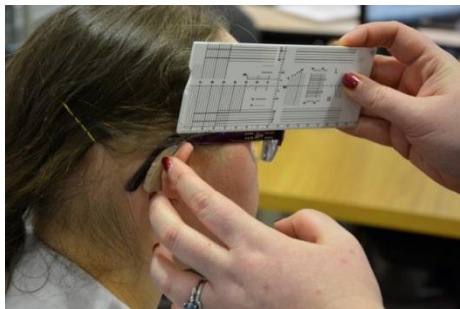
The optician will check your eyesight and tell you if you need new glasses



When choosing your glasses, ask if you can see a dispensing optician. A dispensing optician has extra training to help choose and fit glasses



Everybody needs frames that fit well and are comfortable



If you need glasses, the optician will measure your face to check your new glasses fit well



Your glasses should rest on your nose and fit well over your ears. You should be looking through the centre of the lens



There are lots of frames that are very strong or very thin or flexible. These frames might fit your face better. You can ask your optician about this



If you wear a hearing aid your glasses should fit comfortably over your ear and hearing aid



Make sure you can see through the clear lens of your glasses



It can be easy to notice when glasses do not fit properly

### **There are different types of glasses to choose from**



You may need 2 pairs of glasses. One pair for seeing things close to you, and one pair for seeing things further away

Bifocals or varifocals are glasses that have special lenses



These lenses will help you see further away and close to you



You can get glasses that help you see clearly that are also sunglasses

Some glasses have lenses that go dark when the sun is out

### **Your optician can help you look after your glasses**



You can take your glasses back to your optician if they are not comfortable or you need to get them fixed

They often do small repairs for free

### **People with Down's syndrome are more likely to have problems with their eyes**



Here are some of the eye problems:



### **Blepharitis**

Some people with Down's syndrome get sore, crusty and itchy eye lids

This is called blepharitis

It can be painful and irritating



### **Conjunctivitis**

Sometimes people may get a sore and itchy eye

This is called conjunctivitis

It can be painful and irritating

**Ask your optician, chemist or GP for help if you get sore eyes**



Blepharitis and conjunctivitis can make you want to rub your eyes a lot. This can make your eye worse

Hay fever and other allergies may make your eyes itch too



## **A Squint**

A squint is when your eyes do not move together when you are looking at something

Glasses can help you if you have a squint

If you have a squint it's important to wear your glasses

Talk to your optician if your squint gets worse



## **Cataracts**

A cataract is when the lens in your eye goes cloudy. You can get a cataract at any age

You can have a cataract in one eye or both eyes

Having a cataract makes your eyesight worse



People with Down's syndrome are more likely to have cataracts at a younger age



You or your supporters may notice a change in your eyesight

You or your supporters may notice if your eye is getting cloudy



Tell your optician if you think you might have a cataract. Your optician may arrange an appointment for you at the hospital. You can have an operation to fix your cataracts

## We have two easy read factsheets about cataracts:

Cataracts

Having a cataract operation

These are on our website

Go to:

**[www.seeability.org/looking-after-your-eyes](http://www.seeability.org/looking-after-your-eyes)**



## Keratoconus

Some people, with Down's syndrome have keratoconus

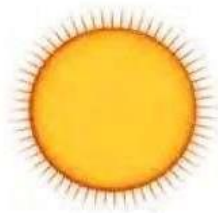
It looks like the eye in this photo



## If you have keratoconus:



Your eyesight can get worse quite quickly



You may find it hard to see in bright light



Your eye may be itchy. Try not to poke or rub your eye



Wearing glasses can help



Wearing contact lenses can help



Your optician will arrange an appointment for you at the hospital. Your eye doctor may tell you about other ways to look after your eyes



## See our factsheets about eye care and glasses

You can find them on our website

Go to:

[www.seeability.org/looking-after-your-eyes](http://www.seeability.org/looking-after-your-eyes)

We have factsheets about:

Healthy eyes

Having an eye test

Wearing glasses

Cataracts

Keratoconus

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