

# YOUR NHS EYECARE EXPLAINED



## Who can have an NHS-funded sight test?

**UK residents are eligible for an NHS-funded sight test if they meet certain criteria: these vary depending on where you live.**

### SCOTLAND

If you live in Scotland you are entitled to an NHS funded sight test every two years or more frequently as advised by your optometrist, this may be the case for the following groups:

- Under 16
- Aged 60 or over
- Diabetic or have ocular hypertension or glaucoma
- Over 40 and have a mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter with glaucoma

### ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

In the rest of the UK, babies, infants and children up to, and including 15 years of age, those aged 16, 17 or 18 years and in full-time education and people aged 60 or over are entitled to a NHS sight test.

People who are also entitled to a NHS sight test include those who are:

- Registered as partially sighted or blind
- Diagnosed with diabetes or glaucoma
- Aged 40 or over and your mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter has been diagnosed with glaucoma

Patients with certain levels of income and those on certain benefits also get NHS sight tests. This applies if you or your partner get:

- Income Support
- Income-based (not contribution-based) Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment (not contribution-based) and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Tax Credits or Universal Credit (and meets the criteria)

People who are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate and those on a low income and named on a valid HC2 certificate also get NHS sight tests. If you or your partner have a current HC3 certificate, you might be able to get partial help towards the cost of your sight test.

People who are eligible for an NHS 'complex' voucher can also have an NHS sight test.

**When you visit an optical practice for an eye examination, you will be asked to complete a form to show why you qualify for an NHS-funded sight test, and to show proof you qualify.**





### WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE SORE EYES, A RED EYE, OR BLURRED VISION?

If you have concerns about your vision or eye health within two years of your last NHS funded sight test you should contact your optical practice in the first instance. There are different services available throughout the UK to manage your eye emergencies/problems:

**WALES:** If you live in Wales you will be able to be seen under the Eye Health Care Wales (EHEW) system

**SCOTLAND:** If you live in Scotland you will be able to be seen under the General Ophthalmic Supplementary Service (GOS)

**ENGLAND:** Depending on where you live in England you may be able to be seen under the Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS)

**NORTHERN IRELAND:** If you live in Northern Ireland you will be able to be seen under the Primary Eyecare Assessment and Referral Service (NI PEARS)

### WHO GETS HELP TOWARDS THE COST OF THEIR SPECTACLES?

The NHS provides vouchers towards the cost of spectacles for people aged up to, and including 15 years of age, those aged 16, 17 or 18 years and in full-time education. If your benefits entitle you to a NHS sight test you also will qualify for help towards the cost of spectacles. If your prescription is 'complex' you can also get a voucher towards the cost of your spectacles.

In some optical practices these vouchers will cover the full cost of your spectacles, but in many you will need to make a payment towards the cost. You can choose to put your voucher towards the spectacles of your choice too.

**Find out more:** [www.abdo.org.uk/eyecareFAQ/NHS](http://www.abdo.org.uk/eyecareFAQ/NHS)



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