

Visual field test



What is a visual field test?

This test examines your central and peripheral (side) vision. You use this part of your vision when you become aware of objects moving into view. The visual field test helps to diagnose and monitor certain eye conditions which affect the retina (the light sensitive layer at the back of the eye), the optic nerve (the nerve which carries information from your eye to your brain) and the visual pathway through the brain.

Why do I need this test?

In certain eye conditions, the field of vision may be affected. It is very common to be unaware of early changes to the peripheral vision, particularly in conditions such as glaucoma.

Will I need the test repeated?

This depends on the results. If you have an eye condition which needs to be monitored, you may be asked to have a visual field assessment at regular intervals. A repeat test can improve the reliability of the result and help to monitor any changes to your vision.

How is the test performed?

The most common visual field test uses a computer called a Humphrey Visual Field Analyser. The computer projects a series of lights that flash on and off, one at a time. Most tests try to find the dimmest light you can possibly see.

1. You will need to sit comfortably with your forehead and chin against the rests. One eye will be covered.
2. Keep looking straight ahead at the central dot throughout the test. Lights will flash on and off at different times and positions within the machine.

3. Press a button as soon as you see a light. Some lights are bright and some are dim. Don't be alarmed if there are periods of time when you do not see any lights, this is normal. Let the technician know if you can not see any lights or if they are not in focus. Try to ignore the noises and respond only to the lights.
4. Blink normally. The best time to blink is after you have just pressed the button.
5. The test will then be repeated for the other eye.

In some cases you may be asked to perform a Goldmann Visual Field Test. This is not a computer controlled test. Instead of flashes of light, you will be shown a moving target of different sizes.

Do I need to bring anything with me to the appointment?

Please bring any glasses that you use, particularly reading glasses. It would be helpful to bring along a copy of your most recent prescription from the Optician.

How long will the test take?

Approximately 5-10 minutes for each eye. If a Goldmann Visual Field Test has been requested by your doctor, this can take up to 30 minutes for each eye.

Remember:

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please tell the hospital so that another person can take your place.

If you have any other questions, please ask the staff in the clinic.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

