

Welcome to the AMD Clinic (Age-related Macular Degeneration Clinic)

Information for patients

Why have I been referred to the AMD Clinic?

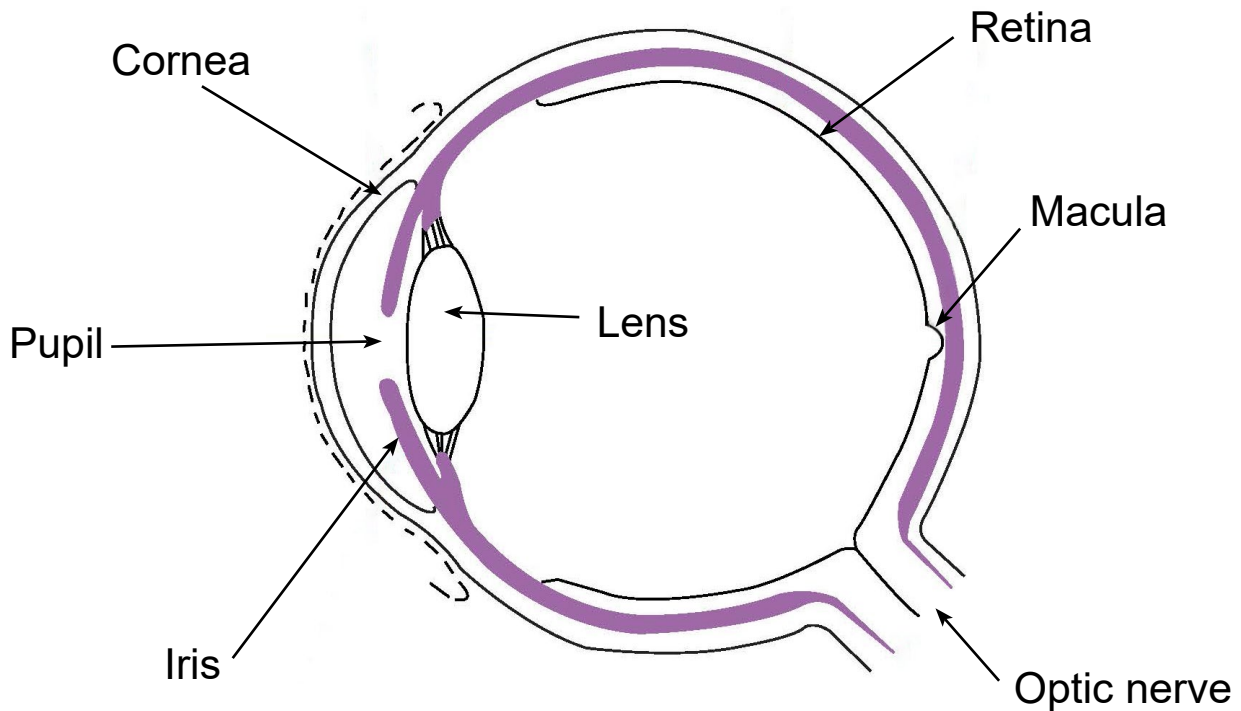
You have been referred by your optician, GP, or other hospital specialist to be reviewed in the AMD Clinic, because there is a suspicion you could have wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD).



What is age-related macular degeneration (AMD)?

The back of the eye is called the retina. The area of the retina that corresponds to the middle of your vision is called the macula.

AMD affects the middle part of your vision, not the edges (peripheral vision). The first symptom is often a blurred or distorted area in your vision. If it gets worse, you might struggle to see anything in the middle of your vision.



There are two types of age-related macular degeneration.

Dry is the most common form of macular degeneration. It is caused by slow changes to the macula over many years. In most cases, some useful vision is kept throughout life. There is no treatment currently available for this condition.

Wet is the less common type of macular degeneration. It is usually caused by abnormal blood vessels under the retina, which bleed and leak causing a sudden loss of central vision.

Can I drive after my clinic appointment?

We advise you not to drive to this appointment, as we will be putting drops into your eye that enlarge your pupils. This allows us to look at the back of your eye, but can affect your vision for a few hours afterwards.

How long will the procedure take?

Your appointment may take most of the morning or afternoon.

What should I expect at my AMD Clinic appointment?

- **Visual acuity test**

An eye technician will check your vision, as a routine part of an eye examination. This test involves reading letters from a chart and will take about five minutes. If you wear distance glasses, please bring these for this test.

- **Eye pressure check**

This is another routine test which measures the fluid pressure inside your eye. An eye technician will use a very light probe to make momentary and gentle contact with your cornea (front of the eye). You will barely notice this, it takes only a few seconds.

- **Dilating drops**

After your vision and eye pressure have been tested, the eye technician will put dilating drops in your eyes to prepare for the OCT (Optical Coherence Tomography) scan. The drops take 15 to 20 minutes to take effect, and you will be asked to take a seat in the waiting room during this time.

The dilating drops will make your eyes sensitive to light and can cause blurry vision. We advise that you bring dark glasses to your appointment and do not drive until your vision returns to what it was before the drops were given. The legal driving requirement is that you are able to read a car registration plate at a distance of 20.5 metres. For more information, please ask a member of staff for a copy of the Trust's **The DVLA and your eyesight** leaflet, or download a copy from www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/eye-patient-leaflets

- **OCT (Optical Coherence Tomography) scan**

An OCT scan is an imaging technique that allows us to assess the individual layers of your retina. It is a simple test which takes only a few minutes and involves taking a photograph with a camera flash of the back of your eye (retina). This will help confirm your diagnosis.

- **Consultation**

Following the above tests, you will meet with a clinician to confirm your diagnosis. Please use this time to ask the clinician any questions you may have. You may need further diagnostic tests.

Due to the large numbers of referrals, you might be seen by an ophthalmic technician, who would perform these first tests. A clinician will then review your results, and telephone you to discuss them. We call this the 'Virtual Clinic'. If you are not available for a telephone appointment, or your clinician feels it is needed, they will book you an appointment to come in to the hospital to discuss your results.

If you are found to have wet AMD the clinician will give you further information and discuss treatment options with you in detail.

The most common treatment we offer is a course of injections of medicine into the eye. It may be possible for us to carry out the first treatment on the same day as you are seen in clinic. It may take two to three hours in the clinic for the consultation and injection. If this is not possible, we will arrange for you to return for treatment within one week of your consultation.

Further information

If you have any further questions during office hours (Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm) about your appointment at the AMD Clinic, please contact the AMD Department on 01227 78 31 72.

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation

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