

Visual Impairment



Regular eye examinations

Encourage the individuals you support to have their eyes examined a minimum of once every two years. It is recommended that eye examinations are carried out annually, even if there is no apparent change in the person's eyesight.

Wearing the correct lenses

If a person wears glasses ensure that they are easily accessible, undamaged and that the correct type are being worn for the task they are undertaking. Check that the lenses are clean and not damaged in any way.

Stop smoking

Research consistently shows that smoking increases the risk of developing Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD). Current smokers are up to four times more likely to have AMD than people who have never smoked. Smokers are more likely to develop AMD up to 10 years earlier than those who have never smoked. Their AMD is likely to progress faster and be less responsive to treatment.

Second hand smoke is also likely to increase the risk of AMD
Smoking and sight loss - Macular Society If a person smokes, identify strategies that can help them stop. Visit [nhs.uk/livewell/smoking](https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/smoking) for advice on how to support someone stopping smoking.

Healthy diet and weight

Ensure people are getting a balanced diet. Eating a diet low in saturated fats, but rich in green leafy vegetables such as spinach (which has lots of Vitamin A) and broccoli, may help protect against cataracts and AMD. See the enclosed 'Health and Nutrition' sheet for more information.

Protection from UV radiation

Advise people to wear sunglasses when in the sunlight, it can protect the eyes from the UVA and UVB rays, which can increase the risk of cataracts.

Visit [Blindness and vision loss - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) for tips to help blind or partially sighted individuals

Visit [Find an optician - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) to locate your nearest Opticians service

