

Protecting your eyes

Support throughout central vision loss

Bright light is painful for many people with macular conditions. You can protect your eyes from glare and ultraviolet light.

**No one need face macular degeneration alone.
For information and support call 0300 3030 111.**

Glare

Glare is the discomfort caused by too much light. A number of macular conditions can make glare more of an issue and some people become very sensitive to light. Other reasons include cataracts, which scatter light as it enters the eye.

Tips for reducing glare

- Wear a hat or cap with a broad brim or peak.
- Choose a close-fitting style of sunglasses or wrap-around frames..
- Try 'over-shields' which have built in

side and brow shields. These are worn over the top of ordinary glasses.



Blue blocking over-shields

- If white paper causes glare while you are reading, try using a transparent plastic 'overlay' sheet or wearing yellow anti-glare spectacles. If you are writing, try yellow paper as it is less likely to cause glare.
- If you find computer

screens uncomfortable, reduce the brightness or change the ‘view settings’ on a website home page. There are plenty of useful tips online on how best to use technology.

A helpful site is mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk. Yellow anti-glare spectacles can also help.

- Make sure lighting at home is bright and even. Lamp bulbs should be covered by shades and positioned so that light doesn’t shine directly into your eyes. For more information read our ‘Lighting’ leaflet.

Ultraviolet light

Ultraviolet light (UV) comes from the sun and is invisible to the human eye. UV light can cause sunburn and damage to the eyes.

Studies suggest that some people could be at a higher risk of developing macular disease because they have low macular pigment, which protects against UV light. Macular pigment is made up of antioxidants such as lutein, which is thought to act as a natural sun screen for the macula. For more information read our ‘Nutrition’ leaflet.

It is important to protect your eyes from UV light to prevent further damage but unfortunately you cannot reverse any damage that has already been done. Encourage everyone you know to have regular eye tests and wear hats and sunglasses.

Reflections from sand, snow and water increase the effects of UV light.

Sunglasses and UV filters

- Make sure sunglasses have a UV filter and ensure

the lenses are good quality by choosing glasses that have a European CE mark or British Standard BS EN ISO 12312-1:2013. Sunglasses marked UV 400 should block 100% of UV.

- UV filters can be clear. They can be used in ordinary prescription glasses, sunglasses and contact lenses.

Top tip

Never use a tinted lens for driving at night. You can reduce dazzle from headlights by keeping your windscreen clean inside and out and getting anti-reflection

coated lenses for your driving spectacles.

Blue blocking lenses

Traditional sunglasses make things darker. Many people with macular disease find this reduces their level of vision, making it harder to see steps or other hazards.

Sunglasses do not generally protect against blue light from the sun which can also cause damage to the eyes. Blue blocking lenses protect the eyes from blue light. They also reduce glare without making everything darker. Blue light tends

to make things hazy, so blue blocking lenses can sharpen images.

These lenses are usually yellow or orange, although other tints can be added to improve their appearance. Paler yellow lenses are good for indoor use because they work well in artificial light, while a range of shades can be suitable for outdoor use depending on the light conditions.

Blue blocking lenses can be ordered from low vision services, sensory impairment teams and resource centres for visually impaired people.

Ordinary prescription glasses can also be made with blue blocking filters. There are no British or European standards for blue blocking lenses, so buy from a reputable company or ask for advice from your optometrist or optician.

For details of suppliers, please contact our helpline 0300 3030 111 or email help@macularsociety.org.

For research references:
www.macularsociety.org/resources/references

How we help

We are the national charity for anyone

affected by central vision loss. We provide free information and support to improve lives today. We fund research to overcome macular disease. All our services are free to those with macular conditions, their family and friends.

Make our helpline your first point of contact for your questions about macular disease.

0300 3030 111

**Monday to Friday
9am – 5pm**

help@macularsociety.org

www.macularsociety.org



As well as the helpline, our services include:

Counselling – confidential telephone support from a professional counsellor.

Support groups – we have over 300 local groups around the UK.

Telephone befrienders – particularly helpful for

those who find it hard to get out and about.

Gadget Guides – tips on using gadgets and technology to help people adapt to living with sight loss.

Skills for Seeing – training to help people make best use of remaining sight.

Six months free membership

If you would like to receive regular updates about living with macular conditions, treatments and medical research to find a cure then membership is for you.

Join for free today by calling 01264 350 551 or go to www.macularsociety.org/6months

We rely on donations to fund support services and medical research. If you would like to donate please go to www.macularsociety.org/donate or call 01264 350551.



Macular Society

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Macular Society

PO Box 1870, Andover, SP10 9AD

01264 350 551

www.macularsociety.org

info@macularsociety.org



@MacularSociety



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