

World Glaucoma Week

March 7-13

Glaucoma UK, the charity that supports people living with the condition, is launching a new campaign to highlight the services it provides to those living with glaucoma. With an estimated 700,000 individuals in the UK living with the disease, half of whom do not know they have it, the charity is urging people to seek support in these challenging COVID-19 times.

Glaucoma is a complicated disease. Put simply, it is a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve. Most people experience no symptoms in the early stages and the only way to know if you have it is to have an eye test. If it's not treated, glaucoma will lead to irreversible sight loss and even blindness. Anyone can develop glaucoma, but there are several risk factors which make the disease more likely, including age, ethnicity and family history.

Being diagnosed with glaucoma might be unexpected and frightening, but Glaucoma UK can give you all the information, advice and support you need to feel confident in your glaucoma journey.

Between 2015 and 2035 the number of people living with glaucoma in the UK is expected to increase by 44%. With an ageing population and modern technology making earlier detection possible, more and more of us are expected to find ourselves affected by the disease.

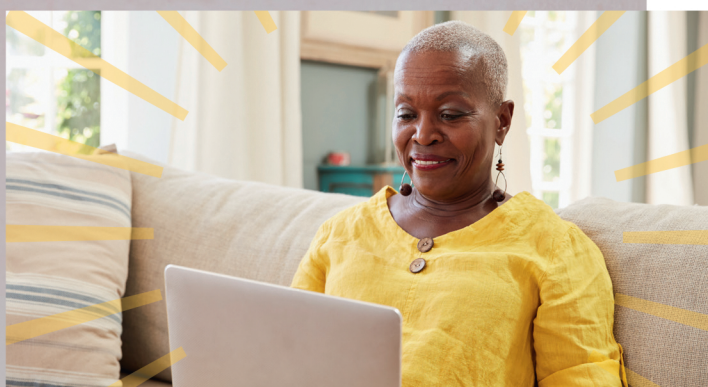
As part of World Glaucoma Week 2021 (7-13 March) Glaucoma UK aims to raise awareness of the different types of support it can offer. The charity is there for people with glaucoma and their loved ones; campaigning to raise awareness so glaucoma is detected early and can be treated. They support people to live well with glaucoma as well as funding sight-saving research.

If you would like to talk about glaucoma or related

conditions such as dry eye or blepharitis, the helpline is available to answer your questions. Glaucoma helpline: 01233 648170 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am-5.00pm). If you call outside these working hours just leave a message and they will call you back as soon as possible.



Glaucoma UK



Glaucoma support groups are back

You can now join glaucoma support groups from the comfort of your home. **Find a digital support group:** glaucoma.uk/supportgroups

Charity Registered in England & Wales no. 274681 and in Scotland no. SC041550



Glaucoma UK

Amar Alwitary, Consultant

Ophthalmologist, said: "Glaucoma is one of the commonest conditions I deal with. It is really important to realise that it is a chronic condition which will require lifelong treatment and lifelong follow-up. It is vital that you comply with your drop medication and also attend the hospital regularly.

"Unfortunately, due to the Covid crisis, we are seeing significant delays to follow-up. This is not ideal and I would urge my patients who have waited some time for their hospital appointment to see their own optician for their annual sight test where they will check the pressures in the eyes. If you have concerns then make contact with us.

"Glaucoma is treatable and the prognosis is good but it is vital that it is picked up early. If you have a family history of glaucoma with a first degree relative having it you have a 1 in 5 chance of developing it yourself. It is important that you are checked annually by the optician.

Remember glaucoma is silent so it can creep up on you without you knowing.

"Glaucoma week is a great opportunity to highlight this important condition and increase public awareness. At this difficult time it is all the more important we work in partnership with our patients."

For more information visit the Glaucoma UK website: [www. glaucoma.uk](https://www.glaucoma.uk)