

Eye Examinations for patients taking Hydroxychloroquine

Patient Information Sheet

We understand that you have been advised to come as you are currently taking or are about to commence taking the medication Hydroxychloroquine or Chloroquine.

Recent studies have shown that a small proportion of patients using this medicine can have some side effects which can affect vision. Because of this, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has recommended annual screening for patients that are taking these medicines, after 5 years of continuous use.

This is therefore the reason that you have been advised to come for an eye test.

However, the tests that are recommended are quite specific and require highly specialised equipment which is not available at this practice.

You are of course welcome to book an eye test here but if this is to be NHS funded then you must be eligible both in terms of timing (there must be an appropriate time interval between eye examinations) and eligibility criteria (you must fall into one of the exempt categories). Should you choose to have an examination here then please be aware that we will of course test your vision and assess the health of your eyes but the detail of this will **fall short** of the scans required by NICE, for the purpose of hydroxychloroquine screening.

NICE has recommended that this screening should be carried out either by a hospital eye department or as part of a commissioned service undertaken by specific Optical Practices which will have both the equipment required and staff trained to interpret the results.

The advice from our practice in conjunction with the Essex Local Optical Committee (an organisation which represents the interests of all the opticians in the area) would be for you to attend for your eye examination when you receive your reminder to attend or sooner if you are having problems with your vision through your spectacles.

The local Rheumatology/Dermatology departments and GPs have been made aware of this position, but it may be wise for you to take this letter with you to your next appointment with them. They should be able to advise you what screening options are available in our area.

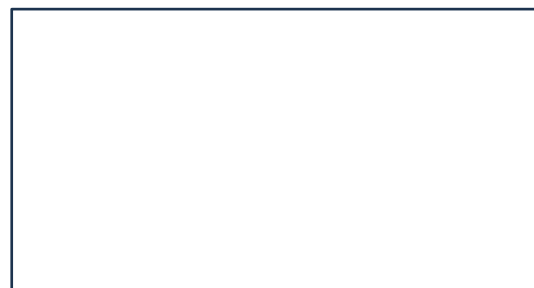
However please DO NOT stop or alter your medication without prior discussion with your prescribing doctor.

Practice Stamp

Signed

Name

Date

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a practice stamp.