



Information for patients taking Hydroxychloroquine

We understand that you may have been advised to attend here as you are currently taking the medication Hydroxychloroquine.

A small proportion of patients using this medicine can suffer irreversible side effects which can cause sight loss. Because of this, the Royal College of Ophthalmologists (RCO) has recommended annual screening for patients that are taking hydroxychloroquine after 5 years of continuous use.

However, the stipulated tests are very specific and require highly specialised equipment that is not available at this practice.

You are of course welcome to book an eye test here but this will not meet the aforementioned screening standards.

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

The advice from our practice in conjunction with the Suffolk Local Optical Committee (an NHS funded organisation which represents local opticians) would be for you to attend for your eye examination when you receive your reminder or sooner if you are having eye related symptoms.

The doctors who prescribe Hydroxychloroquine have been made aware of this position, but you are welcome to take this letter to them.

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

References

1. [Hydroxychloroquine and Chloroquine Retinopathy: Recommendations on Monitoring | The Royal College of Ophthalmologists \(rcophth.ac.uk\)](https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/clinical-ops/hydroxychloroquine-and-chloroquine-retinopathy-recommendations-on-monitoring/)