



**Down
Syndrome
Ireland**

Vision Information For Families and Carers



If you support someone with Down syndrome, you need to be alert to visual changes.

Advice is available from the Down Syndrome Medical Interest Group (DSMIG), including the following information relevant for teens and adults: There is an increased incidence of a range of ocular disorders in people with Down syndrome including cataracts, squint, glaucoma, blepharitis, blocked tear ducts, nystagmus and keratoconus.

Regular formal visual assessments are recommended at least every 2 years, throughout life.

Examination for keratoconus should be annual from pre-adolescence up to the age of 25 years, since treatment is viable only in the early stages.

Further information available here: <https://www.dsmig.org.uk/information-resources/by-topic/vision/>

What can you do?

Be aware of symptoms suggesting eye discomfort, for example:

- Increased light sensitivity
- Persistent eye rubbing
- Sore, itchy eyelids

Notice symptoms of change in functional vision:

- Difficulty using the TV, phone or computer
- Difficulty reading/recognising print
- Difficulty interpreting visual information (e.g. a change in colour/texture on a level floor interpreted as a step up or down)
- Difficulty with stairs
- Difficulty recognising familiar people and places
- Changes in behaviour

While routine appointments should happen at least every second year, age related changes in vision and eye health may happen earlier for people with Down syndrome, and more frequent checks may be necessary.

- Seek annual appointments to check for Keratoconus in teens and young adults.
- Look for additional appointments if you notice any changes in eye health or vision.
- Vision is vital for maintaining independence and social inclusion, and some conditions can be treated, particularly if caught in the early stages.

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Lynda McGivney-Nolan DipOpt (Hons), MSc. FAOI. MBABO

Specialist optometrist with 35 years clinical experience specialising in neuro-developmental, behavioural and neurological disorders of the visual system. Clinical Director for Special Olympics Opening Eyes Programme.