

NHS Lothian contact lens care for patients

In the Lothian region, NHS contact lens care is provided on behalf of the hospital eye service, by local optical practices, including Cameron Optometry. You have been referred to Cameron Optometry because the Eye Hospital has recommended contact lenses for you. These contact lenses are for a range of eye issues. We have provided more information on the most common conditions below.

Eye conditions

The doctor at the Eye Hospital will have explained your eye condition to you but you may still have some questions. At Cameron Optometry, we are here to support you and answer any questions you may have as they arise.

Keratoconus

Keratoconus literally means 'conical cornea'. The cornea is the front layer of your eye used to focus images onto the back of the eye (the retina), before these get passed to the brain.

If you have keratoconus the cornea is not as naturally rigid as it should be and, as a result, it bulges forward in the centre and becomes thinner and stretched in this area. The cornea typically starts changing shape in the teenage years and settles after eight to 10 years, although this can vary considerably between individuals.

As the cornea is no longer a regular (spherical) shape the vision is distorted, often causing shadows and haloes in your vision. These symptoms are often worse when it is very sunny and with bright lights e.g. car headlights at night.

When the ophthalmologist examines your eyes at the hospital, they will be checking to see if the cornea is continuing to thin. If so, they may suggest a procedure called cross linking to you. This will not improve your vision but is designed to stabilise the eye and prevent further progression.

Most individuals with keratoconus will get their optimum vision with contact lenses (normally hard lenses). Hard, or rigid gas permeable (RGP), contact lenses work by creating a false spherical surface in front of your cornea, mimicking the shape your eye used to be. If you put glasses on, or wear a soft lens that drapes over the eye, the cornea still has the same conical shape and the vision will still be distorted. Hard lenses are not disposable and require to be cleaned at night for use the next day. These lenses typically last from six to 18 months.

Double vision

Double vision can have a range of causes and the contact lens (usually a soft lens), works by blurring or blocking out the vision from the affected eye (like an invisible eye patch).

Post corneal graft

A corneal graft is a complicated operation and your ophthalmologist will advise you when you can be fitted with a contact lens, if required. Like keratoconus, the cornea may be an irregular shape and the vision therefore distorted, sometimes causing shadows and haloes. A hard contact lens would create a false spherical, smooth surface to give you the best possible vision.



Post removal of own crystalline lens (Aphakia)

This can happen for a range of reasons, such as a complicated cataract operation or an injury to the eye. Without either your own crystalline lens or an artificial lens, you will be unable to see clearly. Glasses tend not to be offered as the prescription would be very high in the affected eye and would not look good cosmetically and could make you feel off-balance. A contact lens (usually soft) would be advised to solve these difficulties.

Glare

Glare can follow an injury or complicated eye operation. A soft contact lens can be used to block out some or all the light getting into the eye, giving a similar effect to wearing sunglasses over one eye only.

Improved cosmetic appearance

Whether due to scarring or an injury to the eye cosmetic lenses (usually soft) can be life-changing.

Your eye care team

Ophthalmologists at the hospital

The ophthalmologists are the eye doctors who you will have already met and they will have diagnosed your eye condition and discussed their plan with you. Your ophthalmologist has asked the optometrists at Cameron Optometry to provide you with contact lenses and we will report our progress to them at regular intervals. We work closely with the ophthalmologists as a team to look after your eyes and give you the best possible outcome.

For keratoconus: Dr Ashish Agrawal, Dr Naing Latt Tint and Dr Peter Koay

These consultants will have overseen your diagnosis and the proposed plan for monitoring your keratoconus. Typically, this involves an appointment every six months initially, to assess if the condition is progressing or not.



Optometrists at Cameron Optometry Claire Keith, Heather Grandon, Ian Cameron, Gillian Bruce and Rebecca Daly and Alexandra Young

Our optometrists, (a type of optician), are specially trained to fit contact lenses for patients with complex eye conditions. At your first appointment, they will explain your eye condition to you and may give you information to take away to read at your leisure. They will also take various measurements of your eyes to help determine if you are suitable for contact lenses and which type of lenses are the best for you. If you are not suitable for contact lenses, or at a later date cannot tolerate them, we can also provide glasses for you, however the hospital does not subsidise the cost of glasses. You may see different optometrists depending on availability and on which day of the week you attend the practice.

Contact lens support team at Cameron Optometry

The clinical support team has taught hundreds of adults and children to handle contact lenses. They are hugely supportive and some have training in coping with anxiety. On the recommendation of the optometrist, they will teach you how to manage your lenses, including all aspects of inserting, removing and caring for them. We are all here to help and if that means several appointments with one of the support team, then we are more than happy to provide this. We know how much you will benefit from wearing the contact lenses so will give you all the support we can to ensure you adapt to them successfully.

At Cameron Optometry

Cameron Optometry has been providing hospital contact lens care for over 50 years and our optometrists are incredibly experienced in this area. Our practice is based in an old Georgian town house in the centre of Edinburgh and feels very much like a house inside rather than a hospital.

Your appointments

Your eye doctor at the hospital will refer you to us and once we receive that referral we will contact you to make your first appointment.

Your initial appointment at Cameron Optometry will be with an optometrist. They will take the measurements they need and decide the best type of contact lens for you. Your second appointment is a fitting appointment and will involve calculating the exact shape and size of lens your eye needs and hopefully ordering the lens at this visit. Typically, the third visit involves an assessment of the lens on your eye and your first handling appointment in which you will be taught to apply, remove and care for your lenses.

Moving forward we will continue to see you at regular intervals and ensure you have the best possible vision and comfort from the lenses.

You will no doubt have lots of questions about your eye condition and the contact lenses before your first visit so do write them down and there will be time to discuss them with the team at your first appointment. We will be in touch with you soon to make that appointment and really look forward to welcoming you to the practice.

Cost of your care

Although we are an independent, private practice, we carry out this work on behalf of the NHS which covers the cost of all your appointments and heavily subsidises the cost of the lenses. Under the scheme, you pay a standard contribution of £57 per lens, unless you are under 19 and in full-time education, or on certain benefits (more information will be provided at your first appointment). In some areas, contact lenses will be supplied in hospital clinics, but in Edinburgh this service is carried out in the community. In both situations the costs are the same.

As these appointments are being carried out on behalf of the Eye Hospital, you should be able to get time away from work, in the same way if you were attending a hospital for treatment for a condition. If there are any problems, we can help your employer to understand the system of providing care to you.



Where to find us

Our practice is located at:

Cameron Optometry, 5 St Vincent Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6SW

[Find us on Google Maps](#)

There are many parking bays nearby and we are well served by public transport.



By car: there are 'pay and display' spaces located in Heriot Row, North West Circus, Circus Place and Cumberland Street.

[Map of available spaces.](#)



On foot: the practice is on the edge of the New Town and Stockbridge. Heading down Howe Street towards the church at the bottom of the hill, the practice is on the left hand side just before the church.



By bus: [Lothian Buses](#) 23, 24, 27, 29 and 42 all have stops near the practice.



By train: Waverley is the nearest train station to the practice.



Accessibility

A portable ramp is available for wheelchair users or buggies. It is helpful, but not essential, to give us advance notice if this is required. There are two steps with railings on either side to enter the practice and one step into the main vestibule. The main consulting, screening and dispensing rooms are located on the ground floor. If it's better for you to be seen on the ground floor, just let us know.

If you have any additional needs, please let us know and we will make every effort to accommodate you. Patients are also very welcome to visit the practice in advance of their appointments or request a quieter time of day to visit. Please just ask. To view the inside of the practice, search Cameron Optometry on Google and then click 360 view.

Opening hours

Monday – Friday 9am-5.30pm

Emergency contact numbers

Your optometrist will provide you with an emergency phone number that you can speak to someone if you have a contact lens problem out of our opening hours.

You will find more information on our team, our experience and our services on our website cameronoptom.com. You can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



**CAMERON
OPTOMETRY**
EDINBURGH

5 St Vincent Street, Edinburgh, EH3 6SW · 0131 225 2235
vision@cameronoptom.com