

## Visual Field Loss Following Stroke

---

### Visual Field Loss Following Stroke

You have been diagnosed with possible visual field loss, but will need further testing to confirm this diagnosis.

#### 1. What is a Visual Field?

Visual field is the term given to describe the whole of what you see when looking straight ahead, and includes both your central and your peripheral [outer] vision. Each eye has its own visual field, which overlap to give stereoscopic vision, commonly referred to as 3D vision.

#### 2. What is visual field loss?

Visual field loss is when you have lost an area of vision in your visual field, and it can occur in one or both eyes.

Visual field loss following stroke, however, most commonly affects both eyes, resulting in a visual field loss to one side. Usually this loss is to the same side as any weakness in your face, arms or legs.

Visual field loss following stroke is caused by damage to the visual pathway rather than the eye itself. The visual pathway relays the visual images from the eye through to the brain.

#### 3. How can I tell if I have visual field loss?

If you have visual field loss you may:

- Notice you cannot see objects to one side
- Bump into or fall over objects to your blind side
- Find crowded area difficult as people or objects suddenly appear to your blind side
- Experience difficulties reading and writing
- Experience visual hallucinations [see things that are not there]

#### 4. Can visual field loss get better?

Recovery depends on the area of brain affected and how much damage has been done. Unfortunately, not all patients experiencing visual field loss will improve. When recovery does occur, it will usually do so within 3-6 months. Although persistent visual field loss cannot be 'cured', strategies can be taught to help the patient adjust and cope with their visual field loss.

## **5. What happens next?**

You will be assessed further in the Orthoptic [eye specialist] department using an automated (computerised) visual field test. This is a more accurate test which will tell us the exact degree of any visual field loss you have experienced. The Orthoptist will talk you through the results of this visual field test and provide further information and advice as necessary. This appointment will be sent to you when you have been discharged from the stroke unit.

For further advice please contact:

Mrs. Fiona Beckett or Dr Eve Panesar  
Orthoptic Department  
Outpatients  
Harrogate District Hospital

Tel 01423 553452

If you require this information in an alternative language or format (such as Braille, audiotape or large print), please ask the staff who are looking after you.