

Skills for Seeing

Learning how to make the best use of your remaining vision.

This leaflet is available on audio CD.

**You don't have to face macular disease alone.
For the best information and support call us on
0300 3030 111.**

Introduction

Skills for Seeing offers one to one advice and practical support to help you make the most of your remaining vision.

Learning to use your vision more effectively means you can retain independence, continue doing the things you love and improve your sense of wellbeing.

Macular degeneration is progressive and your needs and challenges change over time. Skills for Seeing can equip you with the knowledge to adapt to change as it happens.

Understanding your vision

Skills for Seeing is a two part programme. Part one focuses on helping you to better understand your vision and manage your condition. Combined with effective use of lighting and low vision aids, most people will benefit from this first session.

Part two introduces you to the techniques of eccentric viewing and steady eye strategy.

Eccentric viewing

Eccentric viewing teaches you to identify and use the clearest part of your vision.

Combined with steady eye strategy, you could continue with tasks like reading even if central vision is very poor.

Through a series of simple exercises, your trainer will help you identify the best part of your remaining vision.

They will teach you how to use this area of vision for different tasks. This means you may need to look away from an object to see it more clearly. For example, you may look slightly above someone's head to see their face because you can't see it clearly if you look straight at them.

With time and practice eccentric viewing can become automatic.

Steady eye strategy

Steady eye strategy is a technique that can help with reading text. Your trainer will teach you to keep your eyes still and move the text through the best part of your vision. This can help you read faster and more accurately.

This technique is harder to learn than eccentric viewing but it is particularly useful for people who have a very small area of central vision that is still clear.

Will it work for me?

Nearly every person who has the first session reports an improvement in the way they manage their low vision. The second part, eccentric viewing and steady eye strategy, is not always suitable for everyone.

These techniques work best for people who have macular disease in both eyes. It can be more difficult to pick up the skills if you have other health conditions that affect your ability to learn and practise.

Learning eccentric viewing won't restore

your vision to the way it was, but it will enable you to use the vision you have in the most effective way.

How will I learn?

Skills for Seeing is delivered by a trained volunteer or one of our partner organisations in your local community. It can be delivered in your own home, or at a mutually convenient location.

If you would like to go on to learn eccentric viewing and steady eye strategy, this is delivered over a further two sessions, one or two weeks apart.

The training is provided free of charge to you, thanks to the generosity of donations to the Macular Society.

Beating Macular Disease

The Macular Society is the only charity determined to beat the fear and isolation of macular disease with world-class research, and the best advice and support.

For more information or to see how we can help you, call us on **0300 3030 111** or visit our website at **macularsociety.org**

Working with you to Beat Macular Disease:

- We provide the best advice and information on living with macular disease.
- Macular Society Support Groups can help you to beat the isolation of macular disease, by connecting you with other local people who know what you're going through – offering support and companionship.
- Our research programme is focused on finding new treatments and a cure to Beat Macular Disease forever.

Macular Society

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