

Advice for Students with Eye Complaints

Eye Emergencies

For *emergencies*, the Emergency Department (ED) at the John Radcliffe Hospital is free to all and open 24 hours a day, every day. You don't need an appointment to attend. The John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Oxford OX3 9DU Tel: 01865 741166

In a life-threatening medical emergency, please call **999** and ask for an ambulance.

Eye Tests – Opticians

Eye tests are not free under the NHS but many local opticians offer sight tests for around £25. In Queens Street, OX1 1ER, you'll find *Specsavers* and *Vision Express*.

Support with Health Costs

If you are having financial difficulties, you may be eligible to apply for help with costs.

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-low-income-scheme>

Check [here if you are eligible for an NHS voucher](#) (includes students under the age of 18 and in full time education).

If you are worried about health costs and are experiencing financial hardship, you can get support from the SPC Finance Officer: Katie Pullen-Rowland (katie.pullen@spc.ox.ac.uk).

Pharmacy Advice

If you have a minor eye complaint you can visit any local pharmacy in Oxford. Pharmacists are happy to give free advice to customers and some offer free private consultations, but you may need to book an appointment. Over-the-counter treatments/medications, from the chemist, don't require a prescription from a Doctor. You can buy Chloramphenicol to treat conjunctivitis eye infections, antihistamines for eye allergy symptoms and eye lubricating drops for dry eye. The closest pharmacy to College is on the first floor of Boots on Cornmarket, you can ask to speak to the pharmacist directly, it is usually open until 8pm.

<https://www.boots.com/stores/330-oxford-cornmarket-street-ox1-3hl>

Oxfordshire Minor Eye Condition Service (MECS)

[MECS is free under the NHS](#) for some eye complaints but you do have to be registered with a Doctor in Oxfordshire to use it.

Conditions treated by MECS include: dry, gritty, irritable and uncomfortable eyes, foreign body in the eye, red eye or eyelids, in-growing eyelashes, watery discharge, recent and sudden changes in vision. This service is **not** for major eye conditions such as cataracts, diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma, but they can refer patients to other services if necessary or urgent. The nearest MECS to SPC is SpecSavers (1st floor) 33 Queen St, Oxford OX1 1ER, opposite Marks & Spencer. Ask for the NHS MECS service and ask if your condition is eligible for free NHS care or you may be charged. Other local MECS registered opticians are listed here:

<https://www.oxfordshireloc.org.uk/public/minor>

NHS Service

You could try the free NHS 111 online service, just follow the instructions.

<https://111.nhs.uk/>

You can also call 111 for any medical problem, it's a free call and open 24 hours a day.

The College Nurse & College Doctor

The College Nurse & Doctor can advise students with eye complaints. Contact details are available on [the college website](#).

Eye Hospital

The eye hospital is based at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

<https://www.ouh.nhs.uk/eye-hospital/departments/emergencies/>

Call the eye casualty telephone triage line on: *01865 234567 option 1* followed by *option 1*

Open:

- *Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm*
- *Saturday and Sunday 8.30am - 3.30pm (including Bank Holidays)*

Porters

If you need to visit the hospital for medical treatment, you can ask the Porter's to book a taxi for you. The Porters are all First Aid Trained. If you have an accident or incident on the College sites, please complete an accident form in the Lodge.

Feedback

If you have any personal experiences you'd like to share about any of these services, please Email the College Nurse: spcnurse@nhs.net

All feedback & updates are helpful.