

Wet age-related macular degeneration and treating it in Stockport

Assessment Appointment

You have received this letter because there is a possibility that you have the above condition. We will arrange for you to be seen at Optegra Eye Hospital Manchester to confirm whether or not you have Wet Age Related Macular Degeneration (Wet AMD).

Your assessment appointment may be two to three hours because a number of tests need to be done before you see the consultant.

If you have not heard from Optegra Eye Hospital Manchester within 2 weeks, please contact Optegra on 0161 240 0700.

Outcome of the Assessment Appointment

The outcome of this appointment will either be:-

- That you do not have Wet AMD – in which case you will be discharged.
- You do have wet AMD and you are suitable for treatment by one of a number of available drugs.
- You do have wet AMD but your eyes are not suitable for drug therapy. If this is the case your consultant will refer you to another service that can help.
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- You have a different condition – If this is the case your consultant will refer you to another service that can help.

What is Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration?

Wet Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) usually occurs in people over 50. It is an eye condition in which damage to the central part of the retina (the macula) which results in you gradually losing more and more of your central vision. However, on occasions deterioration of vision may be rapid. The loss of central vision makes it difficult for you to see fine detail.

You have been referred for an assessment to see if you have Wet-AMD.

Treatments for Wet-AMD

If you have wet AMD, you may be suitable for treatment with a drug containing anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF). If so, it will be important to give this treatment quickly. This kind of drug slows the development of new blood vessels and in many cases can stop the disease. Some patients report improved vision.

Further information about the treatment

Two anti-VEGF drugs are available to ophthalmologists:
Ranibizumab (Lucentis) and Aflibercept (Eylea)

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an agency that looks at new drugs to see if they work for the particular disease they are intended to treat and for which they have a licence. NICE also decides if the NHS should provide funding for suitable drugs. NICE have looked at Lucentis and Eylea for wet AMD and have decided that these are effective treatments for Wet AMD.

Your consultant will be able to talk through the differences between these two drugs, including how good they are at treating the condition and the differences in side effects. The final choice of drug is up to you and the NHS will fund all of your treatment costs regardless of which drug you choose. All of the doctors giving the treatment are accredited consultant ophthalmologists. All of the treatments will be to NHS standards and you will have exactly the same rights, including access to the NHS complaints procedures.

If you wish to learn more about age related macular degeneration and how to treat it, you may find the information produced by the RNIB helpful:

<http://www.rnib.org.uk/eyehealth/eyeconditions/conditionsac/pages/antivegf.aspx>

RNIB Helpline Tel: 0303 123 9999 Email: helpline@rnib.org.