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Visual Field Testing

What is a visual field test?

A visual field test is used to assess and monitor your peripheral vision (how well you see to the side or edge of your vision). It provides important information about the function of the brain, retina and optic nerve. Visual field testing is very useful in detecting certain eye problems at an early stage. Glaucoma is one such eye problem. It is also used to monitor the progress of the disease.

What does the test involve?

A visual field test is completely painless, but you do need to concentrate to get accurate results. It does not involve any eye drops. It normally takes about 20 minutes to complete. Each eye is tested separately while the other eye is covered with a patch.

You will be asked to sit in front of a machine and keep looking straight ahead at a target spot of light. Faint lights will appear to the side of your vision and you will be asked to press a button each time you see one. Some of the lights may seem very faint indeed and others may be so faint that you do not see them at all. The computer will come back to check areas so do not worry.

Some patients find it difficult to maintain their focus on the central target. If you are having difficulty let the field technician know, they will be with you throughout the test and are there to help you.

What do I need to bring?

Please bring your reading or bifocal glasses. You should always bring any glasses that you wear to your out-patient appointments.

What happens to the results?

The results of the test will be printed out and I will discuss the findings with you.