

# Devon in Sight Eye Condition Fact Sheet 24

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## Short-sightedness (Myopia)

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### Introduction

**If you are short-sighted you have problems seeing things in the distance clearly, but can see things that are close. There are varying degrees of short-sightedness.**

### Who is affected by short-sightedness (myopia)?

Around a third of people in the UK are short-sighted. The condition usually starts during primary school years and tends to worsen until the eye has stopped growing. Myopia can also develop in very young children. Adults may also become short-sighted. You are more likely to become short sighted if your parents are also short sighted.

### What are the causes of short-sightedness (myopia)?

Short-sightedness is usually due to the eye being slightly too long, which means that light focuses in front of the retina at the back of your eye, rather than focussing directly on it.

### How do you treat short-sightedness (myopia)?

Myopia is usually easy to correct with glasses and contact lenses. Some adults with myopia have laser surgery to correct it. There are some treatments that may slow down myopia during childhood.

### How myopic could I become?

The exact causes of myopia are not fully understood, so it is difficult to predict accurately how myopic a person may become in the future. Researchers know that the following things may make it more likely that a child will eventually become myopic:

- having one or both parents with myopia

- being of east-Asian ethnic origin
- spending limited time outdoors.

Becoming myopic before nine years old may increase the risk of developing a high level of myopia. If a person has a high level of myopia, they will be at a slightly greater risk of losing their sight later in life due to conditions such as retinal detachments, glaucoma and myopic retinal degeneration.

### **Myopia information and support**

College of Optometrists “Through my eyes video” shows what your vision can be like with Short-sightedness (Myopia).

**Website link:** <https://lookafteryoureyes.org/eye-conditions/short-sightedness-myopia/>

### **What to do next?**

If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms or your sight loss deteriorates, please contact your GP/Optician/Accident & Emergency Department at your local Hospital.

**If you need any further advice call our Helpline: 01392 876 666**

**Devon in Sight** is a member of the **Helpline Partnership Community**.

### **Credit**

We would like to thank the **Royal College of Optometrists** for their kind permission to reproduce this information.

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### **Further Support Available from Devon in Sight**

- **Information, Advice and Guidance**
- **Demonstrations of Low Vision Aids & Daily Living Equipment**
- **Assistive Technology Solutions**
- **Our holistic needs assessment (Sight Loss MOT)**
- **Training for people with central vision loss (Skills for Seeing)**

## Information Disclaimer

**Devon in Sight** is committed to producing Information, Advice & Guidance Resources that are clear, accurate, evidence-based, up-to-date and easy to use. We have a robust information production process based on best practice to ensure that information we produce meets the needs of people who are blind or partially sighted and their family and friends.

**Devon in Sight** is not a medical organisation; therefore we can only provide general information that is not intended to be a substitute for a proper medical assessment. Our information is not intended to be used for individual cases. If you have a specific question about your eye condition, we recommend that you consult an eye care professional.

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Our Information, Advice & Guidance Resources were correct at the time of writing. However, due to research and medical advances, the content may not be completely up to date.

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## Devon in Sight Contact Information



**Helpline 01392 876 666**  
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