## What is wrong with my vision, and what can I do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No eye disease</th>
<th>Glaucoma or ‘black blindness’</th>
<th>Cataract or ‘white blindness’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearance of the eye to others</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Normal vision" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Normal black appearance of pupil" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Glaucoma

- **What can I notice/feel?**
  - Nothing initially, not even pain. You may often bump into things, or fall over objects on the ground, because you are losing the outer edges of your vision.
- **Who is at risk?**
  - People who are 40 years of age or older
  - People with a relative who has glaucoma – a parent, sister or brother, or older child
  - People who wear spectacles to see distant objects, who have had an eye injury before, or who use steroid eye drops.
- **Can other family members be affected?**
  - Yes! Glaucoma can run in the family
- **How urgently do I need to get help?**
  - Very urgently!
- **What happens if I wait a long time before being treated?**
  - You may lose your sight, and you will be unable to get it back
- **What treatment options do I have?**
  - Vision can be preserved by lowering eye pressure with eye drops, an operation, laser treatment, or a combination of these options
- **What long-term treatment may I need?**
  - Continued use of eye drops or monitoring after the operation or laser treatment at an eye clinic
- **What are the costs?**
  - Medical treatment: the lifetime cost of eye drops
  - An operation or laser treatment: the cost of an operation and possibly some medication afterwards
- **What are the risks of treatment?**
  - Very few side effects of eye drops.
  - Surgery can have complications, but these can be managed at the eye clinic
- **What will happen if I stick to my treatment and/or say yes to an operation?**
  - Your vision will be preserved – you will still be able to see as you did before.
  - It will take a lot longer before you go blind, if you go blind at all
- **What happens if I do not accept treatment?**
  - Your vision will gradually worsen and eventually you will become completely blind. **This vision is lost forever and can never come back!**
- **Will traditional medicine help me?**
  - No. Delay in obtaining the correct treatment means you are likely to lose even more vision
- **What can I do?**
  - Report to the nearest eye clinic urgently to be examined.
  - If you think a relative may have glaucoma advise them to do the same

### Cataract

- **Who is at risk?**
  - People who are 40 years of age or older
  - People with a previous eye injury
  - People with diabetes
  - People who use steroid eye drops or tablets
- **How urgently do I need to get help?**
  - As soon as possible
- **What happens if I wait a long time before being treated?**
  - It is very likely that you will regain vision
- **What treatment options do I have?**
  - Vision can be restored with a cataract operation and an artificial lens implant
- **What long-term treatment may I need?**
  - Usually none. You may need to wear spectacles after the operation
- **What are the costs?**
  - One-time cost of the cataract operation
- **What are the risks of treatment?**
  - Highly successful operation with very few or no complications
- **What will happen if I stick to my treatment and/or say yes to an operation?**
  - Your vision will be better than before
- **What happens if I do not accept treatment?**
  - Your vision will gradually worsen until you become completely blind. But, at any time, accepting a cataract operation will restore your sight
- **Will traditional medicine help me?**
  - No. Traditional treatment, known as ‘couching’ (pushing a needle into the eye), can have very serious complications and is not recommended. Eye medication from traditional healers cannot restore sight
- **What can I do?**
  - Report to the nearest eye clinic to be examined. If you know someone who may have cataracts advise them to do the same