

The test only takes a couple of minutes but you should allow 15 to 20 minutes for the appointment.

You should be able to drive immediately on completion of the test. However, in a small number of cases the vision could be blurry for a few hours during which time driving should not be attempted.

What happens next?

If your eye pressure is within the normal range no further action is needed and you will be advised to continue having regular sight examinations with your usual optometrist.

If the reading remains above normal you will be asked to return for a further test within 14 days. If this further test shows above normal results, your usual optometrist will be notified and they will recommend to your GP that you are referred to a Hospital Eye Department.

If, in the unlikely event, the pressure is recorded as very high then you will be referred directly to a Hospital Eye Department.

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Intra-Ocular Pressure Referral Refinement Service

Information for patients in Somerset



Information on a Somerset service providing free assessment for patients whose eye pressure is outside the normal range

What is the Intra-Ocular Pressure Referral Refinement Service?

The Intra-Ocular Pressure Referral Refinement Service is a free NHS service designed to aid the accurate detection of glaucoma.

The service is provided by local optometrists who have been accredited by the NHS to provide the additional service.

Why am I being referred to the Service?

The tests that your optometrist has performed today have indicated that the pressure within your eyes may be above the normal range.

If your eye pressure is above normal you may have an increased risk of developing glaucoma, so we need to refer you for a special test.

What is Glaucoma?

Glaucoma is usually caused by excess fluid pressure within the eye which leads to damage to the optic nerve at the back

of the eye. Glaucoma can result in permanent vision defects which may become severe if left undetected or untreated.

Recent guidelines state that a diagnosis of glaucoma can only be made after the eye pressure has been measured using a special instrument called a Goldmann Applanation Tonometer (GAT). In the past this would normally have required a hospital appointment, but now it can be done by a local optometrist at a time convenient to you.

Who will carry out the test?

Your optometrist will have advised you that you should have your eye pressures tested using the GAT. It is possible that he or she is accredited to perform the test and you may be able to have the test done immediately following your normal eye examination.

If they are not accredited you will be offered a choice of alternative optometric practices to attend for the test. When you have decided where you wish to go, your nominated

practice will contact you within two working days to make the appointment. The appointment should be within the next 10 days.

It is important to note that you are not being transferred to another optometrist and your normal optometrist is still making the decision regarding your ongoing care. The second optometrist is quite simply providing a refined pressure reading, and your usual optometrist will be kept informed of the results.

What will happen at my appointment?

Some coloured drops will be put into your eyes. These will numb the front of your eyes for a few minutes to make sure the test does not cause any discomfort.

A blue light is shone at the eye and the head of the tonometer is held against the front of the eye. This allows the intra-ocular pressure to be accurately measured.

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