

# **Hydroxychloroquine Eye Monitoring Service**

## **Patient Information**

### **About the hydroxychloroquine eye monitoring service**

The hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) eye monitoring service is provided by Paragon Clinic, an eye care clinic based in Shrewsbury, on behalf of the NHS in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

### **What is hydroxychloroquine?**

Hydroxychloroquine is a type of medicine used to treat inflammatory conditions, including [rheumatoid arthritis](#), juvenile idiopathic arthritis (inflammation of joints in children) and [lupus](#). It's also used to treat some skin conditions. Sometimes chloroquine is used instead of hydroxychloroquine.

These medicines reduce swelling (inflammation), pain and stiffness of joints, and can improve or clear up some skin conditions.

### **Why is eye monitoring needed?**

Hydroxychloroquine is a very safe and effective drug but, like all medicines, it can cause side effects, although not everyone gets them. To find out more go to [www.nhs.uk/medicines/hydroxychloroquine/](http://www.nhs.uk/medicines/hydroxychloroquine/)

Some people who take hydroxychloroquine for many years and/or in high doses are at an increased risk of damage to their retina. The retina is the light sensitive layer of cells at the back of the eye.

Regular eye monitoring can detect these changes early to prevent permanent damage to vision (Chloroquine has similar side-effects).

### **When is eye monitoring needed?**

It is recommended you attend eye monitoring every year if you are aged over 12 years and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a) You have been on hydroxychloroquine for over five years.
- b) You have been on hydroxychloroquine for one year but at a higher dose.
- c) You have been on hydroxychloroquine for one year but also on tamoxifen.
- d) You have been on hydroxychloroquine for one year and you have kidney disease.
- e) You have been on chloroquine for over one year.

Service provided by:

## How can I get an appointment for hydroxychloroquine monitoring?

If you meet the above criteria for monitoring, then your GP or Rheumatology consultant would have referred you to the service.

You will be invited by email, telephone, or letter to attend your eye monitoring appointment.

Your appointment will be at Paragon Clinic, Bank Farm Road, Shrewsbury SY3 6DU.

If you have not been referred, then please ask your GP or Rheumatology consultant to check if you need to be referred.

## What does eye monitoring involve?

On arrival at Paragon Clinic, a member of staff will ask you some questions about your hydroxychloroquine treatment and about your health in general.

They will then test your eye health and vision and take a scan of each eye. These tests are very easy and painless. The appointment will take about 30 minutes to 1 hour.

You won't receive eye drops that dilate your pupils so you can drive straight after your appointment. Occasionally, we may ask you to return for further tests which do require dilating drops. The drops take two hours to wear off.

## Contact Paragon Clinic

Phone: 01743 650 480 Email: [reception@paragon-clinic.com](mailto:reception@paragon-clinic.com)

Unit 5-6 Radbrook Green Professional Centre, Bank Farm Road  
Shrewsbury SY3 6DU



## Useful information

Versus Arthritis information:

[www.versusarthritis.org](http://www.versusarthritis.org)



Macular Society information:

[www.macularsociety.org](http://www.macularsociety.org)

