

Diagnostic imaging

Information

Diagnostic imaging and equipment

Often people who visit the optometrist expect to be prescribed glasses or contact lenses to correct their vision, but a visit to the optometrist is so much more than that. With the latest scanning and imaging equipment in optometric practices, eye diseases can often be detected early enough to receive treatment to reduce the risk of vision loss and blindness. Eye diseases including glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy can be screened and monitored more accurately with the latest imaging equipment.

Some diagnostic imaging can also help in the detection of general health conditions including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke and some brain tumours. In these instances, early detection and referral to a patient's GP or health-care provider often result in earlier treatment.

What are these tests?

Retinal photography

A special camera photographs the retina at the back of the eye. The camera has different filters to examine different layers of the retina for a more thorough examination.

Visual fields examination

This test is designed to find out how well your central and peripheral (side) vision is functioning. Visual field tests reveal how sensitive your vision is by asking you to detect lights of different brightness in different positions.

Optical coherence tomography

A laser scan is used to take a cross-sectional image of the retina so that the optometrist can see all the detail within the separate layers of the retina.

Corneal topography

This equipment is used to take a map of the cornea, the front surface of the eye. It measures how steep or flat the cornea is and is commonly used to ensure contact lenses fit well.

What do these tests show?

Different tests and images are required depending on what your optometrist is looking for in an eye test, your family history or your symptoms. Here are some examples of where an image can help your optometrist to detect, assess and manage aspects of your eye health:

- > Glaucoma
- > Diabetic retinopathy
- > Age-related macular degeneration
- > High blood pressure
- > Migraines/headaches
- > Strokes
- > Brain tumours
- > Retinal detachment
- > Keratoconus - cone-shaped cornea
- > Pre- and post-refractive laser surgery
- > Contact lens fitting

Why are these tests important?

Sometimes the only way to tell if you have an eye condition is through an eye examination. Scans and imaging are cutting-edge techniques to make sure your eyes are healthy. If an eye disease such as macular degeneration or diabetic retinopathy is detected, regular eye examinations and reviews with scans and photographs are often required.

What will these tests cost me?

Most scans and imaging tests are not eligible for a Medicare rebate and are usually charged at the discretion of your optometrist. The optometrist performs these scans or images because they are in your best interest to rule out an eye health condition or to help record changes to your eye over time. The optometrist will advise you why you need a scan or image and the cost involved. They can give you a copy of the image or results if you request it. Some visual fields tests are eligible for a Medicare rebate and your optometrists can tell you when this applies to you.

For more information and help to select the treatments that meet all your eye care and lifestyle needs, ask your optometrist or visit goodvisionforlife.com.au

Your optometrist

