

Coronavirus / Covid-19 update

We're open and here for you!

During this uneasy time, we wish to reassure you that we are following the recommendations of the Australian government, and of our professional and governing bodies, in doing our part with slowing the spread of COVID-19. The health and well-being of patients and staff members remain our absolute priority.

Firstly, we are still open and here to look after any urgent or immediate needs you may have. Secondly, we will also see you if you need a review appointment or a new ophthalmic appointment.

What is an urgent problem?

Examples of urgent and important issues include:

- Sudden change or loss of vision
- Seeing flashes of light and/or new floaters
- Red and painful eye/(s) suspected of eye infections or foreign bodies in the eye
- Sudden onset of headaches and/or double vision
- If you take prescription eye drops and this needs to be renewed
- If you have been urgently referred by an optometrist or your GP
- Infected eyelid cysts
- Intravitreal injections
- Post-operative appointments

If you believe you are experiencing an emergency eye problem outside our practice hours, you should attend the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital in East Melbourne (Ph: 9929 8666).

All non-urgent elective surgeries at both public and private hospitals are currently tightly restricted by the government. For patients whose surgeries were cancelled or postponed, please rest assured that you would be notified as soon as elective surgeries are fully reinstated.

Appointment changes to help protect you and our staff

When you phone for an appointment, you may find that we ask a number of questions to ensure that it is (a) safe, and (b) necessary for you to come into the practice.

On arrival for your scheduled appointment, we ask that you stay in your car and give our reception staff a call to check-in (Ph: 8850 400). Subsequently, we will call you back when it is your turn to be seen.

If you do not have a mobile phone, we ask that you come directly to the reception counter to check-in. Markers on the floor have been used to indicate a safe 1.5m distance between you and the staff. We may give you a buzzer to take to your car and buzz you in when we are ready to see you.

Upon entry, we may check your temperature with a contactless infrared thermometer. You may need to reschedule or return home to have a telephone consultation with the ophthalmologist if you present with a fever or flu-like symptoms.

You will also be asked to sanitise your hands on entering and leaving the practice.

Circumstances when you should not attend

If you have been overseas in the previous 3 weeks, or have been in contact with someone diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19, we ask that you respect

the self-isolation law set up by the government and give us a call first rather than attending in person.

For patients 70 years of age and above, we ask that you give us a call prior to attending in order to minimise exposure and risk. Your ophthalmologist may choose to consult with you over the phone instead of in-person.

Other measures to protect and safe-guard your health

Our orthoptists and administration staff are working reduced schedules in order to minimise the number of people in the practice at any one time. Appointments will be spaced out to minimise contact between patients in the practice. A carer attending with a patient may wait in the car unless there is a mobility or language issue.

To reduce the handling of paper and money, if you have a new referral with you, please take a photo of it and email it to us at reception@doncastereyecentre.com.au. You can also ask your referring optometrist or GP to email or fax us your referral letter. We appreciate contactless card payment in order to avoid handling cash.

In order to protect both yourself and us, we will be limiting the lengths of consultations to generally less than 15 minutes. Therefore, you may notice that our consultations are briefer than normal.

As per the standard procedure for our orthoptists and ophthalmologists, they will continue to wash their hands thoroughly before examining each patient, as well as clean all equipment with alcohol wipes prior to use.

We are grateful for your continued support and understanding during this difficult time. Above all, we hope that you and your family stay safe and well.