

Life after Stroke with Visual Impairment



Hints and Tips
from those with
experience



Strokes can leave many survivors with eye-sight related problems including:

Field Loss: Hemianopia – the inability to see left or right from the centre of your field vision.

Quadrantanopia – blindness in a quarter of your vision field.

Scotoma – blind ‘spots’ in your vision.

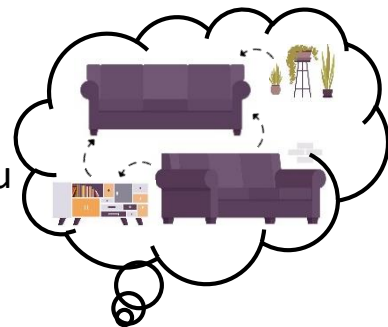
Eye Muscles & Nerve Problems: Diplopia – where your eyes no longer work together causing blurred and double vision.

Vision Processing – you may be able to clearly see an object, however your brain doesn’t process this properly, causing you to ignore objects or being unable to interpret text when reading.

Although this may all seem daunting, there are many tips and tricks to help overcome everyday activities. These are not just for survivors but things friends and family can do to help too.

In the Home

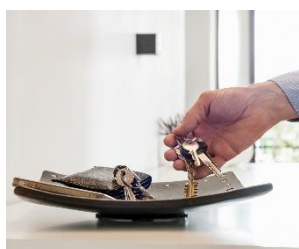
Rearranging the home – by rearranging what is in your home you can create more space, allowing you to move around more freely, minimising the risk of trips and falls.



Organising – by putting items together in one place they can be easily found when needed. Put items you use regularly in an easy accessible place, storing other items away. Folders can be a great way to store important documents, keeping them safe and together.



A shoe rack is a great way of storing the whole family's shoes in a safe place – meaning there is one less thing to potentially trip or fall over.



Have set places where you can leave items and easily find them again - maybe a tray for keys, a box for TV/Radio remotes and glasses, a cupboard/drawer for only your medication.

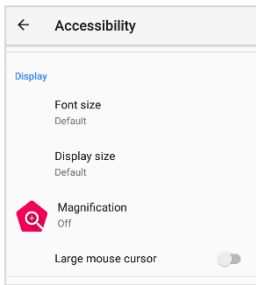
Try to ensure all doors are kept completely open or closed. Doors that are slightly ajar can be easy to walk into



Lighting – is your home too dull to see well? Daylight lamps/bulbs may make it easier.

A thick piece of card can help to follow text when reading or a magnifying glass with a red line through and make reading easier.





When reading/viewing from an electronic device – enlarge the screen or font, many devices also allow the brightness to be altered which may help.

In the Kitchen

There are many products available to help you in the kitchen: loud cooking timers, nonslip cutting mats, talking measuring jugs and scales and talking microwaves.

Different colour chopping boards to contrast with the food you are cutting can help make it stand out more and easier to see – light foods on a dark board and dark foods on a light coloured board



3D pens can be a great way to mark items – you can then feel for them rather than strain to see, for example with measuring jugs, jars, salt & pepper pots.

Use pots and pans with heat resistant handles and make sure the burners are turned off before removing the pans.



A liquid level indicator will beep when the liquid reaches it – simply put it on your jug and pour.

Outside

Keeping close to and following building lines can help keep you away from the roadside.

Walk close to the wall in crowded places – this can help prevent bumping into people and also give you a little more space by not having others rush past you in different directions.



Tell people you have a vision problem, they can then help if needed.

Use a symbol/guide cane – this will make others aware.

Carry a rucksack – it allows you to have both hands free.



By remembering when refuse collections are, you can be more aware of rubbish bins left in the middle of the pavement.



Try to avoid walking past schools during start/finishing times as the pavements will be busier with children running about.

If out with someone get them to walk on your blind side.



Use bus/train apps to help get you out and about – you can specify a journey planner rather than trying to read tiny timetables.

Other

- Learn to scan from an early stage so it becomes instinctive, this can be tiring so take it easy, don't rush it.
- Getting involved with sport i.e. walking football using your scanning skills, tai-chi for balance/coordination, chair yoga – anything that helps keep you moving, however little it may seem.
- Carry a set of headphones with you as many cash machines now have audio features.
- Many smart phones have voice activated apps – for example with siri on apple phones you can ask the phone to call someone, ask for directions, train times etc
- Smart phones also have accessibility features – flashing lights, loud voice notifications, easy unlock.
- Raised sticker dots are great for use everywhere: have one place on the dial temperature of your oven, then rather than needing to see the numbers you can feel for the dot, near keyholes and on switches.
- Find a local support group – these are great places to exchange tips and life hacks as well as supporting individuals. They may help organise trips and events for you to try new things or carry on doing the things you love.



Useful Sites & Contacts:

Being registered as visually impaired or cortical visual impaired (speak with your GP) can sign post you to other services and benefits.



Professional Organisations & Charities

- VISION Research: www.liverpool.ac.uk/psychology-health-and-society/departments/health-services-research/research/vision/
- British and Irish Orthoptic Society: www.orthoptics.org.uk/resources/clinical-advisory-group/stroke-and-neuro-rehabilitation/
- RNIB www.rnib.org.uk
- Partially Sighted Society: www.partsight.org.uk
- Stroke Association www.stroke.org.uk
- Different Strokes www.differentstrokes.co.uk

Other useful websites

- Eye Search is a free on line therapy for people with vision problems www.eyesearch.ucl.ac.uk
- [Dolphin EasyReader app](#) for iPhone and iPad from: itunes.apple.com
- Read Right Website: www.readright.ucl.ac.uk
- My Stroke Guide www.stroke.org.uk/finding-support/my-stroke-guide

Notes for other tips:

This leaflet was written by Mr Jim Currie, a stroke survivor with hemianopia. We acknowledge the input of the VISable patient and public panel in reviewing the content of this leaflet.