

# Your guide to EYLEA<sup>®</sup>

**for the treatment of visual impairment due to diabetic macular oedema (DMO)**

This booklet has been produced for people who have been prescribed EYLEA (aflibercept solution for injection).

## Summary of important safety information

Contact your doctor as soon as possible if you experience any of the following symptoms after treatment with Eylea:

- If any eye pain or redness following the injection does not go away or is getting worse
- If your vision gets more blurred or you can't see as well as usual
- If you become more sensitive to light
- If you experience the sudden appearance of floaters, flashes of light and/or obscured vision.

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard) or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store. By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

# Welcome to your EYLEA guide

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Your doctor has prescribed EYLEA because you have been diagnosed with visual impairment due to diabetic macular oedema, commonly called DMO. This condition is a complication of diabetes which is making it harder for you to see clearly. Treatments like EYLEA can help stop your eyesight from becoming worse, and may improve some of the symptoms you have.

This booklet also contains the Package Leaflet and an audio CD with all of the information contained in this booklet. If you find the Package Leaflet difficult to read, it can be requested in an easier to read format from the RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People) on their Medicine Leaflet Line on 0800 198 5000.

Whether you read this guide or choose to listen to it on CD, it has been made to help answer any questions you may have, so you can get the most out of your treatment.

**Your eye care clinic is:**

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**Contact:**

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**Telephone:**

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**Address:**

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**Email:**

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## Within this book you will find:

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### Information to help you understand DMO

- What is DMO?
- What causes DMO?
- How is visual impairment due to DMO treated?

### What to expect from your EYLEA treatment

- What is EYLEA?
- Who is EYLEA for?
- Why am I being treated with EYLEA?
- How can I get ready for my EYLEA appointment?
- What can I expect at my EYLEA appointment?
- What if I have any concerns or questions?
- What can I expect after my EYLEA appointment?
- When do I need to come back for another appointment?
- How long will my EYLEA treatment last?
- Are there any side effects with EYLEA?

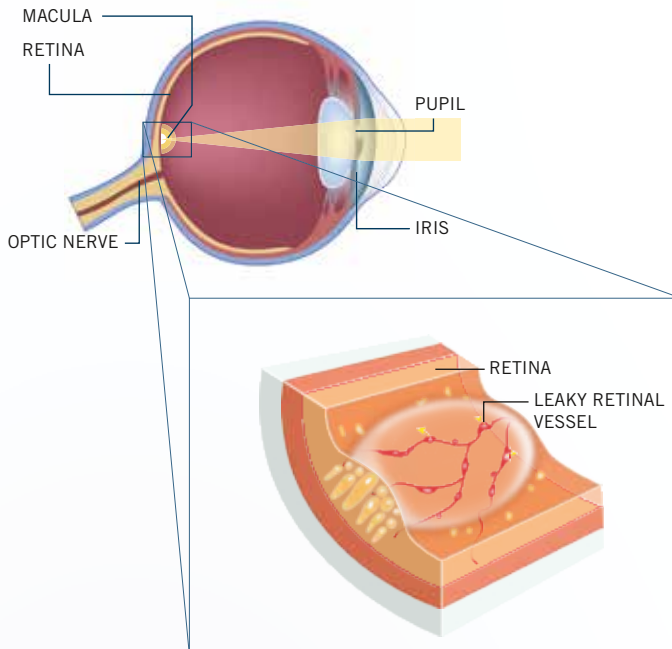
There is also useful advice for living with DMO as well as information about local support groups for people with vision problems.

## What is DMO?

Within the back of your eye, there is a network of tightly woven cells and blood vessels that form a barrier to control substances entering or leaving your retina. The retina is where all of the images you see are recorded – it acts like the film in a camera.

DMO is a condition that damages this barrier, allowing fluid to leak through – this leakage causes swelling. The macula is the part of the retina responsible for central and fine vision. When the macula swells with fluid, central vision becomes blurry.

The diagram below shows which areas of the eye are affected by DMO.



## What causes DMO?

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DMO is caused by long-term exposure to high blood sugar levels caused by diabetes.

Other things that can increase your risk of developing DMO, or make it worse are 'lifestyle' factors including smoking, drinking too much alcohol and being overweight. Quitting smoking greatly lowers the risk of damage to your eyes as well as improving your general health. If you are overweight, losing weight and eating healthily may also help protect your eyesight. Your GP can help you with quitting smoking and losing weight.

Remember: it is important to follow your eye doctor's advice and to make sure you keep all of your appointments with your doctor, whether for treatment or check-ups.

## How is visual impairment due to DMO treated?

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There are several treatment options for DMO and they work in different ways.

Generally these treatments work by reducing leakage of fluid into the macula, which in turn reduces the swelling that can affect vision. Treatment may involve injections or laser.

Since no two people are alike, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Your doctor will choose a treatment best-suited for your individual needs.

## What is EYLEA?

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EYLEA is a type of treatment known as an anti-VEGF. This is an abbreviation for anti-vascular endothelial growth factor, which is a description of how EYLEA works to protect your vision.

In diabetic macular oedema, blood vessels in the back of the eye can become damaged and leaky, causing swelling in the surrounding tissues in the most light-sensitive part of the eye. This swelling can cause problems with your vision. Anti-VEGF drugs such as EYLEA can help to reduce this leakage and may improve your vision as a result.

EYLEA is a solution (a liquid) that is injected into the eye.

While it is understandable to worry about an injection, your doctor will make sure the surface of your eye is numb so you should feel no more than a little pressure during the procedure.



## Who is EYLEA for?

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EYLEA is for people who have been diagnosed with visual impairment due to DMO.

Before your EYLEA treatment starts, make sure to tell your doctor or nurse if you:

- Have an infection in or around your eye
- Currently have redness in your eye or if there is any pain in your eye
- Think you may be allergic to iodine, any painkillers or any of the ingredients in EYLEA. The full list of ingredients can be found in the attached Package Leaflet
- Have had any issues or problems with eye injections before
- Have glaucoma or a history of high pressure in your eye
- See, or have seen, flashes of light or 'floaters' in your vision
- Are taking any medications, with or without a prescription
- Are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding. Although there is no experience of using EYLEA in pregnant women, EYLEA should not be used during pregnancy. Please discuss this with your doctor before treatment with EYLEA
- Are a woman of child-bearing potential, as you should use effective contraception during treatment and for at least 3 months after the last injection of EYLEA
- Had or will have eye surgery within 4 weeks before or after EYLEA treatment

## Why am I being treated with EYLEA?

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EYLEA has been extensively tested in large clinical trials to see how it can help people with visual impairment due to DMO. During these clinical trials, the investigators looked at how well EYLEA works not only to stabilise vision but also improve vision in DMO patients and, in some people, restore some of the sight that has already been lost.

How well EYLEA works for you will depend on a number of things, such as how long you've had visual impairment due to DMO and how well you could see before commencing treatment. Your doctor will often have a good idea of how likely you are to respond to EYLEA, and they will discuss this with you at the beginning of the treatment.

## How can I get ready for my EYLEA appointment?

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Your doctor may ask you to take eye drops for a few days before your appointment. After your treatment, your vision may be blurry so you should not drive home. Plan to have a friend or family member to take you to your appointment, or arrange another way to get there and home again. On the day of your appointment, do not wear any makeup.

## What can I expect at my EYLEA appointment?

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Your doctor or nurse will get you ready for your EYLEA treatment. These people are highly trained professionals with experience in treating visual impairment due to DMO. They understand that the treatment procedure may sound worrying so they will take care to make sure you are relaxed and comfortable.

You will be given eye drops that numb the front surface of the eye and an eye wash will be used to clean your eye and the skin around it. During the procedure your face will be covered by a special drape and your eyelids will be held open with a special device to stop you from blinking.

You will be given the injection into the white of your eye. You should feel no more than a little pressure during the procedure.

## What if I have any concerns or questions?

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If you have any concerns or questions, your doctor or nurse are the best people to speak to. They are very experienced and they know your individual situation so can provide you with the answers you need.

Don't worry about asking questions or voicing any concerns. Your doctor or nurse can give you answers and reassurance.

## What can I expect after my EYLEA appointment?

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Your doctor may give you some eye tests after your injection. This may include measuring the pressure inside your eye. After your injection, your vision may be blurry, so you should not plan to drive until your vision returns to what is normal for you.

If you use contact lenses, your doctor or nurse can advise you when you can start using them again.

Over the next few days you may get a bloodshot eye or see moving spots in your vision. Both of these should improve within days. If they don't, or if they get worse, you should contact your doctor.

Some people might feel a little bit of pain or discomfort in their eye after their injection. It is advisable to take painkillers that you would normally take for a headache. If the pain does not go away or gets worse, you should contact your doctor.

## When do I need to come back for another appointment?

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Your doctor will arrange your next EYLEA appointment with you. Your treatment schedule will be created to best meet your individual needs.

Remember, your doctor and nurse are the best people to speak to if you have any questions about your treatment schedule.

Speak with your doctor before stopping treatment.

## How long will my EYLEA treatment last?

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When you start your treatment with EYLEA, you will normally have 1 injection per month for the first 5 consecutive doses followed by 1 injection every 2 months thereafter. You will not normally have to come into the hospital between your injections.

After you have been on EYLEA for 1 year, your eye doctor may decide you can wait longer than 2 months between injections, depending on your eyesight and the results of other tests on your eye. If this happens, your doctor will decide whether or not you need any extra check-ups between your injection visits.

If at any point your doctor thinks you are not getting any benefit from EYLEA, your treatment will stop.

During treatment, it is important to keep all your appointments so that your treatment is given every opportunity to work as effectively as possible. If for any reason you can't attend an appointment, please contact your eye clinic as soon as possible to arrange a new time.

## Are there any side effects with EYLEA?

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Just like any medicine, whether by prescription or over the counter, EYLEA has the potential to cause side effects. Not everyone who takes EYLEA will experience a side effect.

The most common side effects include:

- Increase of pressure inside the eye
- The gel-like substance inside the eye pulling away from the retina
- Moving spots in vision
- Clouding of the lens (cataract)

Less common side effects which may be serious include:

- Retinal detachment
- Infection/inflammation inside the eye

**Contact your doctor as soon as possible if you experience any increased eye pain, if the redness gets worse, if your vision gets more blurred or you can't see as well as usual, if you become more sensitive to light or if you experience the sudden appearance of floaters, flashes of light and/or obscured vision.**

**For a full list of side effects, refer to the attached Package Leaflet.**

**If you think you might have a side effect from your treatment, speak to your doctor.**

## Advice for living with DMO

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Being diagnosed with visual impairment due to DMO and experiencing problems with your eyesight can be an anxious time. It is normal to worry and feel uncertain about your future, but your diagnosis doesn't mean you can no longer live a full life. You can continue to enjoy family, friends and interests with some small changes.

Some helpful advice includes:

- Tell friends and family that you have DMO and how it affects your eyesight
- Use brighter lighting
- Organise your surroundings so it is easier to find things
- Use torches and magnifying lenses when needed. Take them with you when you go out
- Read large-print books and newspapers and try audio books or computers with large-print settings

For more helpful tips on living with DMO, please see the information on support groups on the following pages.

## Support for people with DMO

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However much you are affected by DMO, it is important to remember that you are not alone. It may be difficult to understand your diagnosis or to come to terms with it. Speaking to experts can help answer questions you may have, while speaking to others who are in, or have been in, a similar situation to you can help you come to terms with your diagnosis.



## Where can I find out more about DMO?

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If you would like to find out more, or be put in touch with other people suffering from DMO, a list of useful contacts can be found below. You can write to these organisations, phone them or, if you have access to the internet, go to their websites. These organisations will have downloadable files of information which can be printed or read on the screen. They may also be able to provide their information in audio format for you to listen to.

### **The Macular Society**

**Helpline:** 0300 3030 111

**Address:** The Macular Society, PO Box 1870,  
Andover SP10 9AD

**Email:** [info@macularsociety.org](mailto:info@macularsociety.org)

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

### **RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)**

**Telephone:** 0303 123 9999

**Address:** RNIB Headquarters, 105 Judd Street,  
London WC1H 9NE

**Email:** [helpline@rnib.org.uk](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

### **Diabetes UK**

**Telephone:** 0345 123 2399

**Address:** Wells Lawrence House, 126 Back Church Lane,  
London E1 1FH

**Email:** [helpline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline@diabetes.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

This guide has been reviewed by the RNIB and Diabetes UK

# Notes

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# Audio guide to EYLEA

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CD WALLET  
PLACEHOLDER

Bayer plc, 400 South Oak Way, Reading, RG2 6AD  
Tel: 0118 2063116 Email: [medical.information@bayer.co.uk](mailto:medical.information@bayer.co.uk)  
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v.2 Date of preparation: December 2018. PP-EYL-UK-0017-1

EYLEA is used to treat visual  
impairment due to diabetic  
macular oedema (DMO)

