Uveitis can be well managed by medication, but it is important to:

- Remember tiredness is common so resting is good – pay attention to your body & slow down especially when you are not feeling well.
- It is important to have regular eye checks.
- Always take the drugs prescribed by your doctor.
- Remember to keep your eyes moist with the help of drops you have been given by your doctor.
- Always wear sunglasses when outside to reduce glare as this will make your eyes worse.
- Filters can be placed on indoor lights (diffusers) to reduce glare.
- Seek help at your school or workplace if you have reduced vision – remember other people cannot see you have a problem with your eyes so ask for help when you need it.

Special equipment can be used to make print bigger & brighter. Your doctor or school can help organise for you to have these at home, school or work. These can include:

- Changing the brightness on your computer to reduce glare,
- Increasing the font on your computer.
- Using magnifiers if you have difficulty reading on either a computer or books.
- Your diet should include a variety of foods. Don’t eat too many foods that contain high levels of sugars, salt & fats.
- Drink adequate fluids, in particular water.
What is uveitis?
Uveitis is a rare condition that can affect your vision. Uveitis is inflammation in the middle layer of the eye, the uvea. Its name comes from two words: “uvea” meaning the coloured parts of the eye & “–itis” meaning inflammation. The uvea carries the blood supply to other parts of the eye so it is important for vision.

There are many types of uveitis & your doctor will be able to tell you what type you have. Many people who have this condition also have other autoimmune conditions such as juvenile inflammatory arthritis or lupus. Uveitis is a leading cause of preventable blindness.

It is not a condition that others can see so you will need to tell other people if you want them to know.

What causes uveitis?
We don’t know what causes uveitis but we do know that it can often be diagnosed together with juvenile inflammatory arthritis & other autoimmune disorders, & that it involves the immune system. Our body uses the immune system to protect itself from harmful things such as bacteria & viruses (bugs). We are not sure why some people have an immune system that does not work properly but we do know that when some people get sick it is caused by the system being overactive & causing harm to itself. This is called autoimmune illness.

There is nothing you could have done to stop yourself getting the condition. You cannot catch it from other people nor give it to others.

What are the signs and symptoms?
- Pain or redness in the eye.
- Dryness of eyes.
- Sensitivity to light (this is called photosensitivity). This can be sunlight or indoor lights, especially fluorescent lights.
- Problems with glare.
- Blurred or reduced vision, sometimes worse than other times.

Headache
Dry & itchy eyes
Light sensitive
Painful & red eyes
Eye pressure
Tiredness
Seeing black spots
Blurred vision

How is it diagnosed?
In most cases (85-90%), another autoimmune illness such as juvenile inflammatory arthritis is diagnosed first. About 1 in 8 children with juvenile inflammatory arthritis will develop uveitis.

If you have autoimmune illness, you are often referred to an eye doctor (ophthalmologist) for eye checks. If you do not have another autoimmune illness, but have the signs & symptoms listed, your doctor may also refer you to an eye doctor so that your eyes can be examined.

The eye doctor will get a medical history from you & check your eyes carefully to look for any signs of uveitis. This will help with early diagnosis & reduce long term damage to the eyes.

How is it treated?
To reduce the inflammation in your eye, your eye doctor may use medications such as eye drops (topical steroids) & / or tablets, such as prednisolone, if the eye drops do not seem to be helping.

In some cases, drugs that suppress the immune system such as methotrexate may be needed to avoid further problems with your eyesight.

These problems can include:
- vision loss,
- cataracts (clouding of the lens in the eye),
- glaucoma (increased pressure in the eye).

The sooner treatment begins the better the chance of halting the damage to your eyes.