



INSIGHT



LENS trial newsletter

June 2020 – Number 2

Welcome to the second edition of **INSIGHT**, the newsletter of the LENS Trial. We hope that you will find it interesting and enjoyable to read.

Thank you very much for your interest and participation in the trial thus far. Please let us know if there are topics that you would like to see discussed, or feel free to send in an interesting picture or story for us to include in future editions.

Associate Professor David Preiss and the LENS team



LENS in the time of COVID-19

Follow-up: for all participants who have already entered the trial, like you, six monthly telephone calls with a member of the LENS team continue as normal. Study treatment is also being sent out by post as usual and new treatment packs are sent once every six months.

Taking your tablets: to be able to tell if the LENS treatment works or not, we need as many participants as possible to take their study tablets regularly. Please continue to take the study tablets even if your NHS retinal screening results change during the study or if you need any treatment for diabetic retinopathy. There can occasionally be good reasons to stop study treatment and we would be keen to discuss any questions you have about the study treatment if you think this is the case.

COVID-19: there is no reason to believe that the medicine we are investigating in LENS, namely fenofibrate, will have any influence on the risk of catching the coronavirus or becoming unwell from COVID-19. You can call the LENS study doctors at any time if you have a query, or you can speak to your GP. NHS Scotland has temporarily paused the retinal screening program but this will restart in due course.

The importance of staying in touch and attending NHS retinal screening

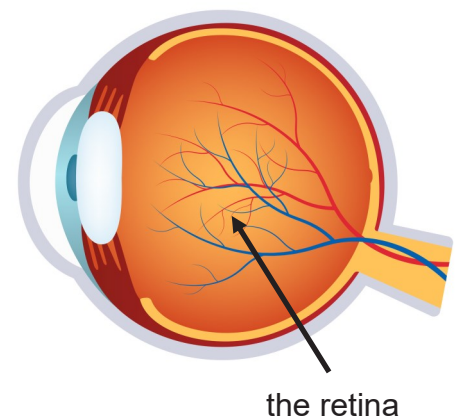
The following steps are all important:

Change of contact details: please let us know if your address, phone number or email address change.

Follow up calls: it is very important for LENS that we know about your health during the trial, regardless of whether you are taking study tablets or not. This is why a research nurse will call you every six months to ask a few questions about your health. These calls only take about five minutes to complete.

NHS retinal screening: it is vital for your eye health that you regularly attend NHS retinal screening when it restarts across Scotland. It also provides crucial data for LENS. Please try your best to attend all retinal screening appointments.

Image of the eye



You can:



Where can participants find out more?
visit the LENS website: www.ctsuo.ox.ac.uk/lens



call a member of the study team: Freephone 0808 164 5090

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Meet the Team



In this edition of **INSIGHT** we are introducing the two doctors who have worked on the trial from the very start: David Preiss in Oxford and Jennifer Logue, previously in Glasgow and now based in Lancaster.

What is your role in the LENS trial?

David - I am the Chief Investigator on the trial. I work with colleagues in Oxford, Glasgow, and our participating hospitals around Scotland to ensure that the trial runs smoothly. The team includes not only our excellent research nurses, but also



the doctors supporting the trial, our project managers, colleagues arranging the supply of study treatment, monitors keeping an eye on the quality of our work, expert statisticians and our administrative team.

Jennifer - I am coordinating the running of the trial in Scotland, alongside our project managers and the teams at our study sites. I worked with hospitals across Scotland to get the study set up and also worked with colleagues in NHS Scotland to put systems in place that allow us to monitor participants through their routine health records. For example, a LENS study doctor in Glasgow monitors the kidney function of all participants by using blood results from tests taken at GP practices. This allows us to make sure you are on the right dose of study medication without the need for extra visits to the hospital for more blood tests.

How did the idea for the trial develop?

David and Jennifer - Scotland is a fantastic country in which to conduct studies in patients who have diabetes. This is thanks to the efforts of forward thinking people who, decades ago, set up national systems to collect key clinical information. Scotland is one of very few countries to have a national retinal screening program. This NHS infrastructure offers great potential to investigate treatments which could help patients. Back in 2013, we discussed our ideas for a trial with the team running NHS Scotland's Diabetic Retinopathy screening program. They shared our enthusiasm and, over time, the LENS trial evolved. We held meetings with patient groups to explore their views on the proposed trial, and feedback was very positive. LENS was one of the first trials to secure funding from a new National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) scheme for *efficient trials*.

What is unique about this trial?

David and Jennifer - most trials of diabetes medicines require face-to-face visits for a number of years, and the costs of those trials are often so high that the medicine being tested is very expensive for the NHS even if the medicine shows benefit. This is a major problem. LENS is closely integrated with NHS diabetes care which means that the study team can collect the relevant information efficiently and at very low cost. Only two face-to-face visits are needed in LENS and this allows people from all corners of the country to take part. Indeed, we have been able to invite almost every eligible person across Scotland!

Thank you for your continuing support!



Freefone 0808 164 5090

LENS is coordinated by the *Clinical Trial Service Unit*,
University of Oxford



lens@ndph.ox.ac.uk



www.ctsu.ox.ac.uk/lens