

# Aniridia

## What is Aniridia?

Aniridia is when the iris or part of the iris of the eye is missing. This means that the muscles that open and close the pupil are missing. This makes the eye appear as though it has little or no colour and a larger than normal pupil. Other changes in eye structure are often present (e.g. cataracts and glaucoma). The condition can be hereditary or be caused by unknown factors.

## How does it affect vision?

Aniridia affects visual acuity and can cause other eye disorders such as photophobia (light sensitivity), cataracts, nystagmus and glaucoma.

## Who is most at risk?

Some forms of aniridia are hereditary and genetic counselling is recommended. The causes for other forms of aniridia are not known.

## How can it be treated?

There is no treatment that can reverse the effects of aniridia; however vision can be maximised using pinhole contact lenses, tinted lenses or sunglasses.

## How does it progress with age?

The direct effects of aniridia remain constant throughout life, however, aniridia can lead to other disorders of the eye and children should be monitored carefully by an ophthalmologist.

*Adapted from Aniridia by TSBVI and Aniridia by the Royal National Institute of Blind People.*

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