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The International Glaucoma Association (IGA) and Santen Produce Unique ‘Eye Test’ for World Glaucoma Awareness Week

The International Glaucoma Association (IGA) and specialist ophthalmology company Santen Pharmaceutical Co Ltd, have joined forces to produce a unique interactive ‘eye test’ to demonstrate what the world looks like to people living with glaucoma. The test is part of a joint campaign to raise awareness of the eye condition among younger first-degree relatives of older people most likely to develop glaucoma.

The test will be posted on IGA and Santen social channels (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) and on their respective websites in time for World Glaucoma Week, 10-16 March 2019. The quiz consists of a series of intriguing questions where images are shown that simulate missing objects and cloudy vision which are the hallmark of glaucoma, and leads to more information about glaucoma.

It is estimated that there are 700,000 people with glaucoma in the UK today, but half are undiagnosed. If left untreated glaucoma can lead to serious loss of vision, with up to 40 per cent of sight being permanently lost before the effects are noticed by the individual. Once sight is lost it cannot be recovered. Glaucoma is the most common cause of *preventable* blindness. Many people are unaware that glaucoma has no symptoms in the early stages, so regular eye health checks (every two years, or every 1-2 years for over 40s, especially where there is a family history of glaucoma) are really important to detect the condition. Early diagnosis and regular treatment, usually with eye drops, can preserve vision and enable people to carry on with their lives.

Commenting on the initiative, Karen Osborn, CEO of the IGA says: “We’re delighted to be partnering with Santen in creating this unique quiz to raise awareness of glaucoma among a younger audience. By reaching people via their social channels in a visually impactful way, we hope to create a lasting impression of what glaucoma sight loss looks like, so they can be aware of early symptoms among older relatives and can encourage regular eye checks to pick up the condition early.”

Paul Campbell, Marketing Manager at Santen says, “As a global pharmaceutical company dedicated to ophthalmology, Santen is committed to the protection of eyesight and the health of patients. We are proud to be partnering with the International Glaucoma Association on this awareness-raising initiative. Glaucoma can result in sight loss if it isn’t diagnosed and treated early and consistently, so this interactive ‘eye test’ is an innovative way to engage and educate people on the importance of regular eye checks and the potential impact of the disease.”

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About the International Glaucoma Association

1. The International Glaucoma Association (IGA) is *the* charity for people with glaucoma. Its mission is to raise awareness of glaucoma, promote research related to early diagnosis and treatment, and to provide support to patients and all those who care for them. For more information, please visit: www.glaucoma-association.com
2. Set up in 1974, it is the oldest patient based glaucoma association in the world and it is a registered charity in England and Wales, and also in Scotland.
3. As part of its support services, the IGA operates the Sightline (telephone helpline) and provides free information on any aspect of glaucoma.
4. For more information about glaucoma, contact the International Glaucoma Association (IGA) telephone helpline on 01233 64 81 70 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am–5.00pm)
5. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, close relatives of people with glaucoma who are aged 40 plus can have a sight test and examination by an optometrist which is paid for by the NHS, and everyone aged 60 and over is entitled to free testing. In Scotland, the NHS will pay for glaucoma examinations offered by optometrists, regardless of age.

About Santen

As a specialised company dedicated to the ophthalmology field, Santen carries out research, development, marketing, and sales of pharmaceuticals, over-the-counter products and devices. Santen has long been the market leader in Japan for prescription ophthalmic pharmaceuticals and is now a leader in the sector in the EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) region. With scientific knowledge and organizational capabilities nurtured over nearly 130 years, Santen products and services now reach over 60 countries, contributing to the well-being of patients, their loved ones and consequently to society. For more information, please visit Santen websites www.santen.com (Japan headquarters) and www.santen.eu (EMEA).