

Say goodbye to your granny specs

Whether you keep them discreetly tucked away in your purse or pocket, once on, reading glasses add years to your looks.

You might not wear your reading glasses on a chain around your neck, but many of us feel they might as well be. Today reading glasses are everywhere - even restaurants like Leicestershire's Gibson's Grey Lady provide spares to read the menu, if you've left yours behind.

Each year Britons spend more than half a billion pounds on anti-ageing products to iron out wrinkles, but getting rid of your reading glasses is one of the most effective ways to look younger.

Conductive Keratoplasty (CK) treats loss of near vision - Presbyopia - using the controlled release of radio frequency energy to strengthen the cornea, reducing the need for reading glasses.

Grandmother Ely Lawrence underwent CK treatment at Harley Street clinic Advance VisionCare - and hasn't worn reading glasses since. The 58-year-old underwent the treatment, which lasted just a few minutes, and her sight improved almost immediately.

Like many babyboomers, the 58-year-old isn't ready to hide her looks behind granny specs and now her sight is better than she can remember.

"It is brilliant - I haven't put on a pair since that day," she says of the treatment she underwent earlier this year. "I hated them, hated wearing them and I wanted my eyes back. It was a sign of old age. I had glasses in my car and every room of the house, but I hated wearing them.

"I lost my eyes when I was 40, when I suddenly couldn't thread a needle, but now I can. It's amazing, all my friends are jealous, especially when they are fumbling around for their specs when we are out in a restaurant and they can't read the menu."

Presbyopia is the UK's most common eye condition, affecting everyone over the age of 45 - an estimated 24 million people. People suffering from Presbyopia will typically find it difficult to see simple things like the numbers on mobile phones and have to hold objects further away in order to focus, eventually forcing them to wear reading glasses or bifocals. Although the condition starts in our mid-forties, many feel the effects in our fifties as it gradually worsens and have to hold things further and further away.

"As we get older we are less able to focus on objects close up and

start holding things like newspapers and books and other close work further away in order to focus on them," explains Mr CT Pillai, Medical Director at Advance VisionCare.

"Many people consider reading glasses an unpleasant but inevitable part of the ageing process but CK can turn back the clock and could mean no more embarrassing pauses as you fumble for your glasses to read the menu at a social occasion or while out shopping."

Typically treatment is only carried out on one eye and takes three to five minutes. There is no cutting involved in the procedure, which helps to minimise side effects and speed recovery.

CK has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the USA, which is the gold standard for approving medical procedures in the world and it is becoming increasingly common there. To date more than 150,000 CK procedures have been performed worldwide with no serious side effects. Treatment costs around £1250 per eye.

"This painless treatment is like winding the clock back by 10 years," adds Mr Pillai. ■



Presbyopia is the UK's most common eye condition, affecting 18 million people. It causes near vision to fade with age, making it difficult to see things up-close.

Conductive Keratoplasty is the only procedure designed for long-sightedness that uses radiowave energy instead of a laser to correct your vision.

Anaesthetic drops numb the eye to be treated and then a tiny probe as fine as human hair emits tightly-focused radio waves at specific points on the surface of the eye around the cornea. This creates heat that helps to slightly shrink the collagen in the eye. This in turn steepens the curvature of the cornea, correcting sight. Because there is no cutting it helps to minimize side effects and speed recovery and takes around 10 minutes. More than 125,000 CK procedures have been performed world wide with no serious complications. The procedure may not be permanent - some people may need a retreatment in 5-10 years in the future.