NEWS LESSON

Could New Goggles Help People with Sight Loss?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. What everyday invention do you wish someone would improve?
2. What makes a science headline sound too good to be true?
3. Can a small improvement be life-changing?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**goggles**	☐	A	special glasses that cover your eyes
2	**virus**	☐	B	to bring something back to how it was before
3	**restore**	☐	C	a feeling that you can do something well
4	**damage**	☐	D	able to notice small changes, such as light
5	**sensitive**	☐	E	a very small living thing that can make people ill
6	**trial**	☐	F	a treatment that makes an illness go away
7	**confidence**	☐	G	harm that spoils something
8	**cure**	☐	H	a test to see if a new treatment works

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

A new treatment uses gene therapy and special goggles to help some blind people see more. It is not a cure, but it is a step forward.

1 For a person who has lost much of their sight, being able to find a door or see where an object is placed could make daily life easier. Scientists are trying out an experimental treatment that may help some people with one inherited eye condition do these things. It uses a form of gene therapy together with special electronic goggles. The results of a small study, published in October 2026, offer some hope, although the treatment is still experimental.

2 The study involved ten people with advanced retinitis pigmentosa. This is a group of inherited eye conditions that slowly damage the cells needed for vision. Over time, people can lose so much sight that everyday activities become difficult. Existing treatments cannot restore ordinary vision for most people with very advanced forms of the condition.

3 Researchers used a method called optogenetics. First, doctors injected a virus into one eye. The virus had been changed so that it could carry instructions that helped certain cells in the eye respond to light. Patients then used special goggles, which took pictures of the world around them and turned those pictures into light signals. Together, the injection and the goggles gave the brain some visual information.

4 The results were encouraging but limited. Six of the ten patients showed an important improvement in how sensitive they were to light. Some were also better able to find or touch objects while using the goggles. Researchers reported tasks such as finding a notebook or a doorway. However, the patients could not see normally, and the technology did not allow them to make out faces.

5 The trial mainly tested whether the treatment was safe. One serious eye-related problem occurred during an injection, but doctors treated it quickly. The researchers said that more studies are necessary to understand how useful the treatment could become. The small number of patients also means it is too early to know whether similar results would occur in a much larger group.

6 Even small improvements can matter in daily life. Finding an object independently or moving around a room with greater confidence may seem ordinary to someone with good vision, but it can be significant for somebody with severe sight loss. Scientists hope the approach will become more effective in the future. For now, it is an early medical step, not a cure for blindness, and the next challenge is to turn a promising experiment into help that more people can actually use.

Sources: The Guardian. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. More than half of the patients showed a clear improvement in sensitivity to light. T F NG
2. The goggles will be available in shops next year. T F NG
3. The study was small, with ten patients. T F NG
4. The treatment allowed patients to recognise faces. T F NG
5. The virus was put into both eyes of each patient. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

encouraging **experimental** **independently** **injected** **limited** **reliable** **treated**

1. Because the treatment is still _____ , doctors cannot offer it to everyone yet.
2. The first results were _____ , so the researchers felt hopeful.
3. Doctors _____ the medicine into one eye with a very small needle.
4. Many people prefer to do things _____ and not ask for help.
5. The goggles gave only a _____ amount of information, so patients could not see faces.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. The study _____ ten people with advanced retinitis pigmentosa. (INVOLVE)
2. The virus had been _____ so that it could carry instructions to the cells. (CHANGE)
3. Six of the ten patients _____ an important improvement in light sensitivity. (SHOW)
4. One serious problem _____ during an injection. (OCCUR)
5. The results of the study, _____ in October 2026, offer some hope. (PUBLISH)

7 Language focus: phrasal verbs

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. A phrasal verb is a verb plus a small word such as on or off. The small word changes the meaning, so learn the pair together.

apart	behind	into	on	out	through	up

1. The team wants to find _____ whether the treatment is safe.
2. The goggles turn pictures _____ light signals.
3. The researchers will carry _____ with a larger study.
4. People should not give _____ hope after one small trial.
5. It is hard to tell two similar objects _____ without clear vision.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. How should a headline explain a treatment that helps some people a little?
2. What should researchers explain before asking people to try a new treatment?
3. Which matters more in a science story: the breakthrough or what it changes in daily life?

9 Role-play: choosing a headline

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the editor

You edit a newsletter for a charity that supports people with sight loss. You want a short, exciting headline about a small trial. Ask the writer what the study really showed, then decide together.

Student B · the writer

You've read about a small trial. It helped some people find objects, but it isn't a cure. Explain why the headline must be honest, and suggest a version you both like.

Useful phrases

I'd like the headline to catch people's attention.
That's not quite accurate, though.
We shouldn't promise more than the study showed.
What if we say it's an early step?
I'm not sure that's fair to our readers.
Let's agree on a version we're both happy with.

Afterwards, tell the class: which headline did you choose, and why is it fair to readers?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 A · 2 E · 3 B · 4 G · 5 D · 6 H · 7 C · 8 F

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 NG · 3 T · 4 F · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 experimental · 2 encouraging · 3 injected · 4 independently · 5 limited

6 Verb forms

1 involved · 2 changed · 3 showed · 4 occurred · 5 published

7 Language focus

1 out · 2 into · 3 on · 4 up · 5 apart

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