

MODERN IRIDOLOGY

A HOLISTIC GUIDE TO
READING THE EYE

SARAH DONOGHUE

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A Holistic Guide
to Reading the Eyes

Sarah Donoghue

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Imagine having a blueprint of your genetically inherited strengths and weaknesses—a comprehensive health profile that allowed you to make informed dietary and lifestyle choices that fully supported your unique constitution.

Iridology is such an invaluable tool. This book is a guide to the often-misunderstood subject—a practical manual that can easily be used by medical professionals and interested enthusiasts alike.

Complete with high quality photographs, charts, and detailed case studies, this informative handbook should be a staple on every modern healthcare practitioner's book shelf.

The aim of this book is to:

- **Make iridology accessible to the busy practitioner and non-health-care professionals with any interest and curiosity**
- **Compile current information into one easy-to-follow, no-nonsense, concise, essential guide**
- **Enable readers to safely examine the iris and make confident assessments based on the presentation of the person in front of them**

- Allow readers to formulate appropriate, individualised herbal, dietary, and lifestyle interventions based on information gleaned from the iris

In short, this book takes a holistic approach to explore the subject of iridology from a scientific, physical, emotional, and spiritual perspective.

This book is for:

- Holistic healthcare providers and trained medical professionals who want to deepen their understanding and connection to their patients
- Any human being who is interested in learning about their own unique constitution to make appropriate lifestyle choices to support them in achieving vibrant wellbeing

CONTENTS

PART 1

Introduction to iridology

Introduction	1
What is iridology?	3
Fact vs fiction: what iridology can (and can't) tell you	5
The iridology problem	6
Iridology pioneers	11

PART 2

Looking at the iris competently and safely	15
Buying the right tools	15
Examining the iris safely	16
Photographing the iris—how to do it	16

PART 3

First impressions	21
Observation skills	22
Shen	22
The pupils	23

Different-sized pupils	27
Sanpaku eyes	27
Checklist	28
Exercise	29
 <i>PART 4</i>	
Constitution—what the colour of your eyes says about you	31
What can you learn from the colour of your eyes?	31
The blue iris—the lymphatic constitution	33
The brown iris—the haematogenic constitution	35
The mixed/green/hazel iris—the mixed biliary constitution	37
The central heterochromia	39
The stomach ring	41
 <i>PART 5</i>	
Structure—your inherited disposition	43
What can be learned from the iris structure?	43
Your inherited disposition	44
Structural types	45
Silk	45
Linen	48
Hessian	49
Net	51
Mixed structures	54
The daisy iris (poly-glandular type)	54
The gastric iris	56
 <i>PART 6</i>	
Patterns and markings	59
Diathesis: the iris overlay	59
Colours and what they mean	62
Lacunae, Crypts, and Rarefication	63
 <i>PART 7</i>	
Finding your way around the iris: how to use an iridology chart	65
Choosing your chart	65
Using the chart in practice	66

The collarette (or autonomic nerve wreath)	68
Exercise: studying your own eyes	69
<i>PART 8</i>	
Special signs	71
Contraction furrows	71
Radial furrows (or “wagon wheel” spokes)	72
Pigmentation (psoric) spots	73
The lymphatic rosary	74
Cholesterol rings	75
The scurf rim	76
Common collarette signs	77
<i>PART 9</i>	
Putting it all together—taking a case	79
Taking your first case	79
Exercise: ask a friend	81
<i>PART 10</i>	
Case studies	83
Case study 1: Robin	83
Background history	84
Iridology assessment	86
Case study 2: Violet	90
Background history	90
Iridology assessment	91
Case study 3: Fern	95
Background history	96
Iridology assessment	96
Exercise: take your first case!	98
Checklist	98
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	101
<i>GLOSSARY</i>	103
<i>BIBLIOGRAPHY</i>	105

<i>FURTHER READING & RESOURCES</i>	109
Professional associations	109
Certified training courses	109
Iridology equipment	110
Herbal suppliers and resources in the UK	110
Further resources	111
 <i>GRATITUDE</i>	 113
 <i>INDEX</i>	 115

PART 1

Introduction to iridology

Introduction

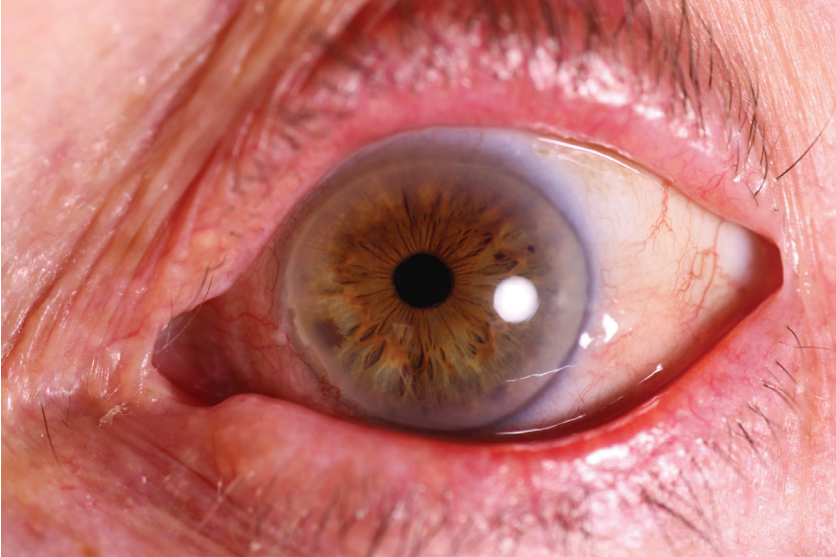
“Such are the eyes; such is the body”

Hippocrates

The study of iridology is a fascinating, yet controversial one. Nobody who has ever lived (or ever will live) has the same unique iris as you. Lying somewhere between a science and a mystical art, it's been the subject of many debates among people around the world for centuries.

The development of new technology now allows anyone with a camera or magnifying tool to easily study the iris in detail. With this in mind, I felt it was high time an attempt was made to make what is a somewhat complex subject, more accessible to the growing number of people who have an increasing awareness of what it truly means to be in good health. This includes the many herbalists, acupuncturists, GPs and millions of other interested enthusiasts who are crying out for our healthcare systems to look less towards reductionist medicine and move towards a more individual, holistic approach to the way we view health and the management of disease.

My own interest in the topic began as a very small child. Having no knowledge of medicine, I was still able to intuit from my grandfather's eyes that all was not well. At age sixty-eight, he had a very common iris sign, which would now be referred to (and widely recognised by any medically trained doctor) as a cholesterol or sodium ring. The common medical term is the *arcus senilis*.



High levels of cholesterol in the arteries are visible as an opaque or foggy white ring, at the top of, or completely encircling the iris. This feature is known as the *arcus senilis*, and is usually found in the elderly. When observed in the eyes of patients under the age of 40, it's referred to as the *arcus juvenilis*, and represents an increased risk for cardiovascular disease.¹

Some years later my grandfather developed heart related health issues, which ultimately led to his demise. I've often wondered if he had had knowledge of this quite obvious sign in his iris, could he potentially have prevented his illness from progressing?

Of course, iridology is not fortune telling, and the intention of this book is not to sensationalise or grossly exaggerate what may or may

¹Akul Munjal and Evan J, Kaufman. *Arcus Senilis* (Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing, 2022).

not be seen in the iris. However, I do want to share with you what I've learned from my own clinical practice over the last thirteen years. My hope is that it will encourage you to gain deeper insights into your own wellness blue-print, and to use this information to create your own bespoke plans for optimal health. After all, iridology benefits not just those who are sick, but also those who are well. This book is therefore intended for two kinds of people—those with a health issue they wish to improve, and those who are healthy and want to stay that way.

This work is a simplified version of the rich and complex study of iridology, and is based on the format followed in the popular workshops I've taught over the last five or so years. I've been very fortunate indeed to have worked with, and learned from some of the pioneering leaders in this field, and can only hope that my own small additions to this burgeoning pot of knowledge will in some incremental way help to move the discussion forward.

In my attempts to simplify this complex topic, I've tried to do away with over complicated jargon; the goal being to make the information clear and concise, so that it may easily be applied by anyone with the right tools and mindset. The purpose of this book is not only to make the subject more accessible, but to create a desire in the reader to further explore the fascinating workings of our amazing human bodies as a hologram of the universe, of which the whole is far greater than the sum of its parts.

This practical handbook is by no means intended to serve as an exhaustive exploration of the topic, but a mere springboard to get you started on the road of discovery. I hope it will open the door of your mind just the tiniest of chinks, to the truly astounding idea that nature holds the answer to so many of our questions, if only we would take the time to stop and look.

What is iridology?

"Iridology affirms the uniqueness of each individual, and the power of the individual to manage his or her own health."²

Peter Jackson-Main

²Peter Jackson-Main, *Practical Iridology* (London: Carroll & Brown, 2004).

Iridology is the study of the iris (the coloured portion of the eye.) Iridologists pay close attention to the **colour, density of fibres, patterns, and markings** of the iris, to determine a person's inherited constitutional strengths and weaknesses. These observations can be used to offer valuable insights into both the genetically inherited constitution, and tendencies towards certain disease patterns of every individual. The value therefore lies in attuning people to their own bodies, with a view to encouraging them to live in harmony with their personal, natural make-up.

Iridology is not a diagnostic tool in a traditional medical sense. Its purpose is less about diagnosing specific diseases, but playing detective to reveal the underlying cause. Why does one person with stress go on to develop stomach ulcers, while another is plagued with high blood pressure?

When approached with an open and enquiring mind, iridology can provide valuable insights into the sensible measures and lifestyle interventions a person can make in order to support their unique constitution (the strengths and weaknesses you were born with.) When thoughtfully applied, this information can potentially be the difference between vibrant health and disease.

Your irides (plural of iris) are as unique and individual as your fingerprints. Even identical twins can be told apart by the differences in their iris structure. Every part of your body (and in my own personal opinion, even some aspects of your personality) are reflected within. It has been estimated that there are approximately 200 different signs which can be identified in the iris. These various patterns, colours and markings are so unique, that this biometric information is detailed enough to distinguish you from every other human being on the planet.

The structure of the iris stems from the neural pathways of the brain. In fact, it's the only part of the body where these nerve fibres can be clearly viewed. Early pioneers believed that these nervous reflexes pertained to corresponding organs of the body, hence the interest in a person's eyes as a helpful diagnostic tool.

As I hope to demonstrate, naturopaths, herbalists, and in fact any other healthcare professional can use this information to provide lifestyle advice, formulate bespoke prescriptions, and offer individual treatment protocols as a form of preventative and corrective medicine. This is known as bio-iridology.³

³James Colton and Sheelagh Colton, *Iridology—Health Analysis & Treatments from the Iris of the Eye* (UK: Element books, 1996), 1.

Fact vs fiction: what iridology can (and can't) tell you

A quick Google search for Iridology will pull up a wide array of videos, bold claims, and often bizarre facts. I guarantee you will also find a substantial selection of articles claiming it is outright quackery. Let's set the record straight about what iridology is and (more importantly) is not.

Iridology CANNOT:

- Tell you if you are pregnant. Conception is a normal healthy process and not a disease.
- Diagnose viral infections such as Covid (although it remains to be seen if traces or “miasms”⁴ of the damage caused by this novel situation will show up in the eyes of future generations). Most common childhood infections (e.g. Chicken pox, the common cold), are transient situations, and as such, do not show up in the iris.
- Diagnose cancer (although it may provide indications of inherited energy weakness within the various tissues, which could make that site a potential area of concern for any number of pathological processes to unfold.)
- Tell you if you have candida, toxicity, or a build up of heavy metals in your body. (Although there is still some debate around this topic, it is my view that further studies need to be done.)
- Determine if healing is taking place in any organ.⁵

Iridology CAN:

- Offer clues about the health issues you are most susceptible to based on your unique constitution inherited at birth.
- Offer insights into genetic traits that can be strengthened or improved with nutrition and good lifestyle habits.
- Highlight certain personality traits *to some extent*. This is known as emotional iridology or Rayid iris interpretation, and is the branch of iridology which is most fervently criticized by its opponents.

⁴Miasm—a weakness or mark left behind after physical disease which can be transmitted down the generational chain.

⁵Although the fore-founders of Iridology believed they were able to see lines form in the eye as healing took place, modern advancements in photography and digital imaging suggest this does not actually happen. The fact remains that for the most part, the iris structure is determined at birth and does not change or alter over a person's lifetime.

The long and short of it is that since the dawn of time, people have made observations about the human body that allow us to intuit certain facts about them. Should we choose to take heed of the signs that nature mirrors back to us (the lustre of one's skin, the light in one's eyes, the texture of a person's fingernails,) we can tentatively begin to make informed assessments about their current state of wellbeing.

Iridology takes this one step further by using data collected over time to create a reliable (but at times imperfect) system. In short, the goal is to use these iris observations to better understand the inherent strengths and weaknesses we are born with. Not only does this offer an exciting possibility for us to gain knowledge of how to take better care of ourselves, but an opportunity to invest in the health of future generations.

The iridology problem

Although iridology of a sorts was at one time taught in medical schools, many modern orthodox practitioners are quick to dismiss or even ridicule the study. This is despite the fact there are many signs visible in the eyes that are universally recognised by the allopathic medical profession, and are known to correlate with certain conditions.

Here is a small selection to illustrate the point:

Anaemia

Iron deficiency can prevent blood from carrying sufficient oxygen to the eye tissues. If you pull down your lower eyelid, the inside layer should be a healthy red colour. If it is very pale (or even yellow), this is usually an indicator of low iron levels. Dark circles under the eyes are another sign that oxygen may not be being adequately delivered to the tissues.

In iridology, chronic anaemia can appear as a bright blue ring around the outer edge of the iris. It can be visible in either the upper or lower portion of the eye (or both), and is easily viewed with the naked eye. This phenomenon is caused by the white of the eye (the sclera) invading the iris.

If any of these signs are observed either by an Iridologist or other medical practitioner, it would be prudent to question the patient about their energy levels, mood, and diet, and if possible, refer them for a blood test to confirm their iron levels are within the normal range.

Brushfield's spots (see also lymphatic rosary)

Brushfield's spots are small, white, yellow or greyish/brown spots found towards the outer edge of the iris. These spots are named after the physician Thomas Brushfield who first described them in his thesis in 1924.⁶ Anyone can be born with Brushfield's spots, but interestingly, it is a common feature in persons born with Down's syndrome.⁷

The sign appears to be more common in blue eyed individuals. However, some iridologists think this may be due to the fact they are more difficult to observe in people with darker iris pigmentation, which obscures the feature. In iridology books, you may also see this sign described as the lymphatic rosary.⁸



Brushfield spots are visible towards the outer edge of the iris and usually appear in pairs. Iridologists refer to this iris sign as the lymphatic rosary.

⁶Lavinia Postolache and Cameron F. Parsa, "Brushfield Spots and Wölfflin Nodules Unveiled in Dark Irides Using near-Infrared Light," *Scientific Reports* 8, no. 1 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-018-36348-6>.

⁷Danielle Ledoux, "Vision and Down Syndrome," published 2022, *National Down Syndrome Society*. <https://ndss.org/resources/vision-down-syndrome>

⁸Refer to information on the lymphatic rosary on Pg 74.

A PRACTICAL, ACCESSIBLE AND INSIGHTFUL HANDBOOK ON READING THE EYE

This book is a guide to the often misunderstood subject of iridology; a practical manual that can easily be used by medical professionals and interested enthusiasts alike. Complete with high quality photographs, charts and detailed case studies, *Modern Iridology* allows readers to safely examine the iris and make confident assessments, as well as formulate individualised herbal, dietary and lifestyle interventions based on information gleaned from the depths of the endlessly fascinating iris.

“Sarah Donoghue has created an easy-to-use guide to the miracle of the human iris and the secrets it holds. Illuminated throughout with anecdotes from her personal experience, and in an easy-going conversational style, she takes the reader on a journey of discovery that can serve as a guide to personal healthcare using the iris to suggest natural therapeutics, as well as a useful resource for practitioners and health professionals.”

Peter Jackson-Main, herbalist, naturopath, fellow of the Guild of Naturopathic Iridologists, and author of *Practical Iridology*

“*Modern Iridology* is an immensely clear and practical guide to this fascinating subject. It’s a book that pulled me in straight away and once I started reading, I couldn’t put it down. Sarah encourages us to look more deeply at the eyes we see, either in the mirror, or in the patients we treat. I am now seeing iridology in a new light. I thoroughly recommend this book.”

Lucy Jones, medical herbalist and author of *Self-Sufficient Herbalism*

“*Modern Iridology* is a handy and welcome addition to the iridology literature, on a par with Dorothy Hall’s classic work. It is compact, informative, and practical. Sarah’s blend of humour and astute observation skilfully illuminate this fascinating reflex system and inspires confidence in its diagnostic merit. I will be recommending *Modern Iridology* to my students, patients and colleagues.”

Dr. Andy Patterson ND, principal of the Hippocratic Institute and president of the Unified Register of Herbal Practitioners

Sarah Donoghue is a herbalist and naturopath with over thirteen years’ experience working with botanical medicines. She completed her training at the College of Naturopathic Medicine in London in 2007 where she studied Western herbal medicine, Ayurveda, traditional Chinese herbal medicine and Iridology. Sarah now runs a busy practice on the Cornish coast in the southwest of England, where she makes her own range of skincare products.

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