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Strabismus (Squint)

Patient information leaflet

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format
please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید،
لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie,
proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil,
vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe
de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتيسيق
يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

This leaflet is designed to answer some of the general queries relating to a squint in childhood.

The orthoptist, optometrist or ophthalmologist will be happy to answer any further questions that you may have regarding your child's treatment.

What is strabismus (squint)?

Strabismus, often referred to as a squint, is a condition in which one eye turns. This turn may mean one eye looks straight ahead whilst the other eye turns inwards towards the nose, outwards, upwards or downwards.

Squints may be constant (all the time) or intermittent (only at certain times). The majority of squints appear in the first three years of life, but occasionally a squint may develop later.

How does a squint affect eyesight?

Children do not grow out of true squints. It is, therefore, essential that they are examined by an eye specialist to assess the squint and the eyesight.

When a squint is present in childhood, the child may stop developing vision in the squinting eye. This may lead to long term poor sight in that eye if left untreated. This is commonly called a "lazy eye".

Notes

What causes strabismus (squint)?

In many cases, strabismus is caused by long sightedness and the child needs glasses (refer to 'my child needs glasses' leaflet for more details).

The strain made by the child to see without glasses causes the eye to turn inward. In other cases there maybe no obvious reason but there is usually a history of glasses and/or strabismus (squint) in the family.

Will my child grow out of a squint?

No - although some strabismus (squint) may improve as the child gets older.

Will my child need treatment?

Vision development will be prioritised, with glasses and any patching necessary given in early childhood - (refer to 'patching for amblyopia, lazy eye' leaflet and / or 'my child needs glasses' leaflet for more details).

Some strabismus improve with these treatments alone, whilst others may need surgery to straighten the eyes (refer to 'squint surgery' leaflet for more details).

Is all strabismus (squint) treated the same?

No— there are many different types of strabismus (squint) and therefore many choices of treatment. No two cases of strabismus should be compared.

Who will treat my child's eyes?

The children's eye care team.

There maybe up to three people who look after your child's eyes.

The ophthalmologist (eye surgeon) is a doctor who will be responsible for your child's general eye care and will carry out any surgery necessary and may prescribe glasses.

The orthoptist (a specialist in the treatment of strabismus and children's eye development) will monitor the development of sight and will advise you of any patching your child needs.

The orthoptist may also advise on any exercises needed to help control the strabismus, and works closely with the ophthalmologist.

The optometrist will check the health of the back of the eye and test your child's need for glasses and issue a prescription.

How long does treatment take?

This varies from patient to patient. Often, earlier intervention has better outcomes.

How do I find out about my child's specific eye condition?

Ask any of the eyecare professionals dealing with your child's eyes. Every case is different and it is easier for them to answer any specific questions you may have.

Links

Additional information can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/eye-tests-in-children/>

Further information

If you need any further assistance, please contact the orthoptic services department on:

Southport	01704 705 213.
Ormskirk	01695 656 690.
St Helens	01744 646 816.