

PATIENT INFORMATION

SQUINT/LAZY EYE

WHAT IS IT AND CAN IT BE TREATED?



Squint and Lazy Eye

You have been given this leaflet to help you to understand more about your child's condition and treatment.

Your Ophthalmologist is the eye specialist in charge of your child's treatment.

Your Orthoptist is the person who is specially trained to deal with children's eye problems such as squint (strabismus), lazy eye (amblyopia) and poor vision.

What is a squint?

A squint means that your child's eyes are "out of line". An eye may turn inwards, outwards, up or down or a combination of any of these. A squint may result in a lazy eye.

What is a lazy eye?

There are two main causes of a lazy eye:

- A squint is a common cause of lazy eye. This happens because your child's eyes are out of line. To overcome this problem, the brain ignores the image from the squinting eye. If this continues untreated, the eye will become lazy.
- Your child may not have a squint but may need glasses that have a different strength in each lens. Without glasses, the brain chooses to ignore the image coming from "the eye with the stronger lens". This eye will then become lazy.
- A lazy eye can only be treated effectively up to a certain age, usually about 7.

Will my child need glasses?

Your child may or may not need glasses. Your Ophthalmologist will test your child's eye using eye drops. These drops will affect the size of the pupils and your child may complain of blurred vision for a few hours after the test. Don't worry this is normal.

If glasses are required, this may be because your child is one of the following:

- Long-sighted (hypermetropic), near vision being affected (and sometimes distance)
- Short-sighted (myopic), distance vision being affected
- Astigmatic, where the problem is worse in one place than the other (think of a rugby ball rather than a football).
- Anisometropic, when any of the above are more marked in one eye than the other. This can result in lazy eye

If glasses are required, we will give you a **HES (P)** or **GOS 2** and **GOS 3** which is the prescription and voucher for the glasses. This is currently worth £42.40 for most lenses. Only one voucher is allowed per child per year. If any change in prescription is clinically necessary within this time, a further prescription and voucher may be issued. If your child has a very small face, a small frame supplement may be payable which helps towards the cost of small frames.

You should take this, as soon as possible, to any High Street Optician (Optometrist) of your choice.

If your child's glasses are lost or need repairing, return to your Optician who will deal with the problem using form **GOS 4**.

What type of treatment might my child have?

- Glasses to improve vision, appearance and possible control of squint.
- Using a patch (occlusion) where the good eye is covered, forcing the lazy eye to work
- Exercises which may be suitable in older children to improve control of the squint and/or relieve symptoms.
- Surgery to straighten the eye. This does not necessarily improve your child's eyesight or alter the need for glasses.
- Monitoring your child's condition.
- A combination of any of the above.

Treatment/observation may continue for some time whilst your child's eyes are developing. Regular attendance at clinic is essential if a successful outcome is to be achieved. Please try and let us know in advance if you are unable to keep your appointments.

If you need to change your appointment, please phone the relevant number below and please have your child's hospital number ready.

Worcestershire Royal Hospital: 01905 760430

Kidderminster Treatment Centre: 01562 512388

Princess of Wales Hospital: 01527 488087

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your Orthoptist who will be only too willing to help you.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.