

PATIENT INFORMATION

Patching for amblyopia

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Why does my child need patching treatment?

Your child has reduced vision in one eye, known medically as amblyopia or a 'lazy eye'.

Amblyopia is treated by patching the eye with better vision to encourage the 'lazy eye' to work.

Causes

Common causes may include:

- A squint (turn in the eye)
- Refractive error (need for glasses)
- Ptosis (droopy eyelid).

When to wear the patch

It can be worn at any point during the day, at school or at home. You may achieve better compliance if your child's attention is distracted, e.g. when colouring, reading or playing computer games.

It is important to note that when a child has a squint (turning eye) the patch improves the vision in the eye, it will not improve the alignment of the eye.

How to wear the patch

Place the patch over the eye as instructed by your orthoptist (see below). Make sure that the patch is directly on the skin and that your child cannot peek around the side of the patch.

If your child wears glasses, these should be placed over the patch and worn fulltime to help encourage the vision to improve.

If your child has an eye infection, the patch should not be worn.

How long should my child wear the patch for?

Your child must wear the patch on the eye, for hours daily.

The hours prescribed may change depending on the response to treatment.

All patches provided are hypoallergenic.

Non-adhesive patches are available although there is a risk of peeking with this form of patching.

Patching risks

Depending on the severity of the reduced vision, you must be aware that your child will not be able to see as well and should be supervised when wearing the patch. This will get easier as the vision improves.

Teaching staff and guardians should be advised to watch your child carefully when they are playing outside, etc, as they will have reduced visual ability and reduced peripheral vision.

Appointments

We follow up patients who are undergoing patching therapy regularly (usually every 4-8 weeks). This is to help maintain motivation; to give you an idea of how the vision is improving and to make sure we are not patching for longer than necessary.

Further important information

If your child has a squint (turning eye), you may notice that the previously straight eye begins to turn at times following patching treatment. This is nothing to worry about, it's a good sign as it means the vision is improving and your child is now happy to look with either eye.

If your child ever complains of double vision for periods of time when the patch has been removed, please stop patching and inform your orthoptist.

CONTACT

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