

Patient information

Lazy Eye

What is a lazy eye?

A lazy eye or amblyopia occurs when the sight of one or both eyes is underdeveloped causing reduced vision.

What causes amblyopia?

A squint(a turn in the eye) is the most common reason for one eye to be amblyopic. Amblyopia can also occur when one eye is more long or short sighted than the other or if there is an obstruction to light reaching the back of the eye e.g. cataract or scarring.

How do we treat amblyopia?

Amblyopia can be treated with glasses and/or occlusion (patching/drops) therapy. Glasses help by letting the eye focus properly, but occluding/blurring one eye may often also be needed. A patch can be used to cover the good eye or a medically prescribed atropine eye drop can be used to blur the vision in the good eye.

How does the occlusion (patching/drops) help my child's sight?

The sight should improve if the child uses the eye more since it is lack of proper use that has caused it to be lazy. Covering or blurring the good eye should make the lazy eye work harder. If the child needs glasses then these should be worn at the same time as patching or eye drops.

Should my child do anything different when being occluded?

Reading, drawing or playing with small toys or computer games (e.g. a DS) are good activities

to encourage the eye to work harder when whilst wearing a patch for a set time . Atropine drops give a constant blur therefore no one activity is best. Your Child may like to watch TV but may need to sit closer to see properly. If your child's sight is very poor it is best to play with things that are big and bright so that they can be seen more easily.

How long will the occlusion take?

This varies from child to child and depends on their age and how long the eye has been lazy. The Orthoptist will see you regularly to monitor progress and will develop a treatment plan to suit you and the visual needs of your child.

Does occlusion therapy really work?

Occlusion will only work if your child wears the patch or instills the eye drops as instructed. Occlusion will only help your child's lazy eye and will not improve a squint. Squints are treated with glasses and/or surgery.

Will it get better on its own?

NO. If left untreated the child may have permanently damaged sight which cannot be corrected when they are older.

Tips

- Encourage
- Keep trying - despite opposition
- Ask for support from others
- Make it fun
- Keep them busy
- Reward good behaviour

Contact Information

For more information please contact the :

Orthoptic Department,
Main building,
UHNM,
Newcastle Road,
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 6QG
Telephone: 01782 674333

We are a teaching hospital with students being taught here. We will ask if you mind them observing your consultation. If you do not wish them to be present, your treatment will not be affected in any way.

Further Information

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service would be pleased to offer confidential advice and support if you have any concerns. PALS can be contacted on 01782 676455 or Email patient.advice@uhns.nhs.uk

