

Is there any specialist help available?

Once Nystagmus has been diagnosed, you will have the option to have your child referred to the Visual Impairment Team (VIP) who can provide extra support and help at home, nursery and schools.

The VIP Team can provide valuable help in a child's education and they can offer advice on other aspects of your child's daily life, such as advising a particular place in the classroom for them to sit to get the best vision. This will depend on a child's null point.

Dependent on the child's level of vision, they may qualify to be registered sight impaired.

Contact Details

Eye Unit **Tel: 01782 676001**
Orthoptic Department **option 5**
Emergency Eye Department **option 1**
www.squintclinic.com
www.nystagmusnet.org

Eye Condition Patient Information Leaflet

Nystagmus



Please speak to a member of staff if you need this leaflet in large print, braille, audio or another language

Introduction

This leaflet provides you with information on Nystagmus. It is not meant to replace the discussion between you and your Doctor/Healthcare Professional but may act as a starting point for discussion.

If after reading it you have any concerns or require further explanation, please discuss this with a member of the Healthcare Team who has been caring for you.

What is Nystagmus?

It is involuntary movements of the eyes. The eyes appear to wobble/shake from side to side (but can move up and down or circular). It is often described as “shaky, jerky or wobbly eyes”.

It is associated with cataracts, ocular albinism, abnormality of the optic nerve, retina (back of the eye)

Nystagmus can also occur in children with learning disabilities or other medical conditions. Sometimes no cause/association can be found.

What causes Nystagmus?

There are two types of Nystagmus:

Congenital Nystagmus develops within the first few months of life occurring when the part of the brain that controls eye movements does not develop properly.

Acquired Nystagmus develops later in life because of damage to the area of the brain that controls eye movements. It can also occur after an illness or following an injury or stroke or it can be inherited.

How can Nystagmus affect my eyes?

Some children with Nystagmus will have no problems with their vision, or only have slight reduced vision. Other children may have very reduced vision and struggle to see things. This will depend on the cause and type of Nystagmus.

Your child may need longer to see or read things due to the constant movement of their eyes. It is important to allow them extra time and to inform nursery or school of this condition.

Children may also find it easier to bring things closer to see as the wobble often lessens as you get closer.

Children with Congenital Nystagmus adapt from a very young age and can manage well as they get older with their learnt coping strategies.

What are the treatment options?

There is no treatment for Nystagmus. Children will have an eye test to see if there is any associated long or short-sightedness.

If a need for glasses is found this may help improve the vision slightly but this is not a cure.

What will I notice?

Your child's eyes may wobble and they may also want to hold their head in a certain position. This is called a null point and is where there is little to no movement of the eyes. It allows your child to achieve their best level of vision.