

## Patient Information Leaflet

# Duane Syndrome In Children



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

- One eye drifting upwards or downwards when they look to the side.
- There may be a squint (turn in the eyes) either inwards or outwards. This will depend on the type and severity of Duane's and usually does not cause any problems.
- Eyelids appear wider and narrower when looking to the side.
- Your child may demonstrate an abnormal head position which allows your child to compensate for where their eye cannot move to. For example, if they cannot move their left eye outwards towards their ear and they may turn their head to the left to allow a greater range of movement. You should allow your child to use this head position.

### What can I do to help the condition?

It is worth discussing with their Nursery to ask them to allow your child to sit on the correct side of the classroom. This puts their eyes in a position away from where the irregular movement takes place.

### Contact Details and further information

**Eye unit / Orthoptic Department**

**Tel: 01782 676001**

[www.uhnm.nhs.uk/our-services/orthoptics](http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/our-services/orthoptics)

## Introduction

This leaflet provides you with information on Duane Syndrome in children.

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 Duane's Syndrome?

Duane syndrome is when one or both of the eyes do not move inwards or outwards. This is associated with a change in the opening of the eyelids.

There are 3 different types of Duane Syndrome which are determined by which muscle(s) are affected and how much movement is restricted. Please ask your Orthoptist if you would like more details.

## What causes Duane Syndrome?

This is a congenital condition which is present from birth. It is not often noticed until the child is a little older, It can go unnoticed for a number of years.

There are 6 muscles that control the movement of the eyes. These muscles work by receiving messages from the brain which are sent through nerves to the muscles.

With Duane Syndrome, the nerves are not connected as they should be and therefore send messages to the wrong muscles.

## Is there any treatment?

In most cases, no treatment is required other than allowing an abnormal head posture.

**Surgery** will alter the position of the eyes, but will not remove the Duane's Syndrome and may be offered if there is:

- A large squint.
- A large head posture (which is affecting the neck muscles/causing pain).
- A large upwards or downwards drift.

**Amblyopia "lazy eye"** can develop as a result of Duane Syndrome. It is where vision in one eye is underdeveloped.

It happens because as one eye turns, the brain switches off the signal from that eye and the cells do not develop as they should.

In this case patching treatment, or eye drops may be used to try and improve the vision however this will not change the movement of the eyes.

For this condition, there are no exercises than can be done. This is because it is caused by a mis-wiring of the nerves and muscles from birth.

## What will I notice about my child's eyes?

You will notice the eyes do not move together when they look to the side.

- They cannot look to one or more sides.
- If they are looking straight ahead, you may not notice anything.