

## Contact Details

If you have any questions concerning your vision please speak to your Orthoptist or a member of the Healthcare Team that has been caring for you.

**Eye Unit**                      **Tel: 01782 676001**

**Orthoptic Department**                      **option 5**

**Emergency Eye Department**                      **option 1**

[www.squintclinic.com](http://www.squintclinic.com)

[www.uhnm.nhs.uk/OurServices/orthoaptics](http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/OurServices/orthoaptics)

## Eye Condition Patient Information Leaflet

# Squint Surgery



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



## What happens after surgery?

- Your eye (or eyes) will be swollen, red and sore.
- It is likely your vision might feel blurry too. This is normal.
- You should start using your drops the morning after your operation and use painkillers (such as paracetamol and ibuprofen) if you feel you need to. The pain usually reduces within a few days.
- The redness and discomfort may be present for up to 3 months, especially if you have had surgery before or you had adjustable stitches.
- **Remember** to not rub your eyes. Continue using your glasses as normal but avoid contact lens wear until you have seen the Doctor.
- Use cooled boiled water and a clean tissue or cotton wool to clean any stickiness from your eyes if necessary.
- Avoid water from your bath or shower from getting into your eyes for the first week. You are advised not to swim for 4 weeks.

## What is involved in Squint Surgery?

- Squint surgery involves shortening the muscle or changing where it is attached to the eye.
- The surgeon is able to access them without removing the eye from its eye socket, as the muscles are quite near to the front of the eye.
- Stitches are used to reattach the muscles in their new positions. These dissolve over time and do not need to be removed.

## What are the different kinds of surgery?

### Non-adjustable surgery

This is usually carried out under general anaesthetic (when you are asleep). It takes around 1 hour (depending on how many muscles are being operated on).

### Adjustable surgery

The ophthalmologist will discuss with you if they think an adjustable operation would be best for you. This can be useful for some people especially if there is a high risk of double vision or if you have had squint surgery before.

During the adjustable surgery, 1 suture (stitch) is made which is not completely tied off. This allows for some adjustment when you have woken up from the main surgery.

The adjustment takes place on the ward or in the eye clinic the morning after your operation.

**If you wear glasses, you will need to bring them with you for the adjustment.**

The Doctor will use anaesthetic eye drops for the adjustment.

### **What happens before surgery?**

- You will need to see the orthoptists on a number of occasions to take measurements of the position and movements of your eyes. This will allow the surgeon to plan how much to move the muscles.
- The orthoptist will assess the risk of double vision after the surgery.
- You will meet with the consultant to discuss the risks and benefits of the surgery so you can make an informed decision about going ahead.
- Before having a general anaesthetic you need to have a pre-operation assessment to make sure you are fit for surgery and the general anaesthetic.

- The needle goes in too far. This can occur if the white of your eye is thin due to squint surgery and can lead to sight loss.
- Infection or retinal detachment (inner layer of the eye), could occur due to previous surgery. If the eye is penetrated, this can lead to loss of sight.

### **Anterior Segment Ischaemia (poor blood supply to the front structures of the eye).**

- The blood supply to the front structures of the eye can be reduced following surgery. These structures include the muscles that allow you to change focus and move your pupil.
- If this occurs, the pupil may be large and vision may be blurred due to the reduction of the blood supply. Only usually occurs in patients who have had multiple surgeries.

### **Infection**

Infection resulting in loss of the eye or vision. This is very rare.

### **Loss of vision**

Loss of vision in the eye being operated on following squint surgery.

## Scarring

- Occasionally, visible scars may remain, especially with repeat operations.
- The scarring on the conjunctiva (a clear layer that covers the white of the eye), should reduce over a period of 3 months after surgery.

## Lost or slipped muscle

- The eye movements can be affected, as the muscle can no longer pull properly. This is caused by one of the eye muscles slipping back from its new position on the eye. This can happen either during or shortly after the operation.
- More surgery may be required if the eye muscle slips back from its new position and it is not possible to completely correct a slipped muscle. This is why you are advised not to rub your eye in the first few weeks after surgery.

## Needle penetration

- A small hole in the eye may occur and sight may be affected depending on where the hole is. This can happen if the stitches are too deep or the white of the eye is thin. Treatment is antibiotics or laser treatment to seal the hole.

## How do I prepare for surgery?

- You can eat up to 6 hours before your operation.
- You can drink clear fluids up to 2 hours before your operation.
- You will need to arrive in the morning at 11.30am, although the operation may not take place until the afternoon.
- You can usually go home the same day as your surgery.
- You will be given eye drops with instructions before you go home and a plan regarding follow-up.

## Does the surgery cure the squint?

- Most people feel some improvement in their squint after surgery, however a squint may not be completely corrected by one operation.
- In some cases, your eyes may look straighter just after the surgery.
- Some people may need another operation during their lifetime.

**The operation does not change your vision, such as a lazy eye or the need for glasses.**

## What are the risks of the operation?

Squint surgery is generally a safe operation, however, as with any operation, complications can occur. These may include:

### Under and Overcorrection

- Squint surgery results are not always completely predictable and therefore the squint you had before the operation may still be present (under correction).
- There may be a squint in the opposite direction after the operation (overcorrection). These problems may require more surgery.

### Double vision

- You may have double vision after surgery as your brain gets used to the new position of your eyes. This is common and often settles in a few days or weeks. For some people, it may take months to improve.
- It is rare for double vision to be permanent after surgery. If this does happen, more treatment will be required.
- If you had double vision before the surgery it may be different after the operation. You will be assessed by the Orthoptist to find what will work best to reduce any double vision.

### Allergy

A mild allergic reaction to the drops that are given after the operation may cause itchy, irritated eyes and red or puffy eyelids. This usually settles quickly once the drops are finished.

### Stitches

- It is normal for the eye to feel slightly gritty before the dissolvable stitches have been absorbed. This takes a few weeks to settle down.
- An infection and cyst may develop around the stitches, therefore you should not swim in the first 4 weeks after the surgery.
- A cyst normally settles when the stitches are absorbed. Occasionally further surgery is needed to remove the cyst.

### Redness

- Redness in the eye which should be reducing and fade in time, may take up to 3 months to go away.
- Occasionally the eye does not return completely to its normal colour. This can happen if you have had more than 1 squint surgery.