

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

# Squint surgery - children

This leaflet will explain what a squint operation entails and what to expect while your child is in hospital. It also answers some frequently asked questions.

Your child will have an appointment for a pre-assessment as an outpatient before the operation.

### **What does the operation entail?**

Your child will have a general anaesthetic (i.e., they will be asleep throughout the whole procedure) and the surgeon will be operating on the muscles, which move the eyes.

The surgeon will operate on the small muscles that control eye movements. Each eye has six muscles that allow the eye to move up, down and side to side. To correct a squint, the surgeon may strengthen or weaken specific muscles by either shortening them or adjusting their position.

For example, if the eye turns inwards the surgeon will most likely strengthen the muscle that pulls the eye out and weaken the muscle that pulls the eye in.

### **What happens afterwards?**

On arrival back to the paediatric ward from the Day Case Unit theatre, your child may have a pad over the eye for a short time.

The eye/s can be red afterwards, but most of the redness settles down within two to four weeks of the operation.

You will be given drops or cream to put in your child's eye following the operation.

These help to reduce the inflammation (redness) and guard against potential infection. They also ease any discomfort as your child may complain of a gritty feeling and may not want to open the eye on the first day after the operation.

### **How long will my child be in hospital?**

Your child will have the operation on the same day you arrive, and you can go home later that same day. However, if the operation is not until the afternoon, your child may still be sleepy or feeling sick from the anaesthetic, possibly needing to stay overnight. A post-operative appointment is made for one week after the operation.

### **How long does my child need to stay off school?**

The doctor will advise you on the length of time your child needs to stay off school or nursery. This is normally about two weeks, to reduce the risk of infection.

### **Will my child still need to wear his/her glasses after the operation?**

Yes, your child will still need to wear glasses unless advised otherwise. Please remember to bring the glasses to all appointments.

### **Is the operation successful?**

Usually, the operation is very successful in straightening the eyes. However, some children may need more than one operation, especially if the squint is very large to begin with. Occasionally the squint can be overcorrected and in a small number of cases further surgery would be needed to correct this.

### Are there any problems?

As with all surgery, there is a minimal anaesthetic risk. Your child's general health will be assessed prior to surgery.

Sometimes there is a risk of double vision after squint surgery. This depends on the individual case and the orthoptist will discuss any risks with you during your appointment.

### Contact details

If you have any queries about your child's treatment, please contact the Orthoptic Department:

- **Email:** [Sfh-tr.orthoptics@nhs.net](mailto:Sfh-tr.orthoptics@nhs.net)
- **Urgent orthoptic queries:**
  - Telephone: 07768615247, Monday to Wednesday, 8am-4pm
  - Telephone: 07825866704, Thursday to Friday, 8am-4pm
- **For appointment booking/cancellation:**
  - Telephone: 01623 672383

### Further sources of information

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our Website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

BIOS Website: [www.orthoptics.org.uk](http://www.orthoptics.org.uk)

### Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know.

You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

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This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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