

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Duane's retraction syndrome

This leaflet describes Duane's retraction syndrome, its causes and possible treatment.

What is Duane's retraction syndrome?

Duane's is an eye movement disorder which is congenital (from birth). It causes problems when looking from one side to the other (horizontal eye movements). This can affect just one eye or both. It more commonly affects the left eye and is more likely to be present in females.

Duane's syndrome can also affect the eye lids, you may notice the eye lids moving up and down depending which direction the child is looking in.

A squint (eye turn) can be present with Duane's syndrome. As can a head turn, this helps to make up for the limited eye movement and allow the child to use both eyes together.

This restriction of eye movements does not change over time.

What causes Duane's syndrome?

It has been found that the nerves which supply the eye muscles are switching on at the wrong times, preventing the eye moving properly.

Is there any treatment?

A routine glasses check (refraction) will be carried out and glasses ordered if necessary, but usually no treatment is necessary. All that is required is monitoring of your child's vision until about the age of six or seven years.

If one eye has become lazy, occlusion therapy (patching) may be necessary to improve the vision in that eye. The orthoptist will advise on this treatment.

To improve the movement of the eye would involve physically altering the muscles. Surgical correction for Duane's is very difficult and the outcome can be unpredictable. Surgery is only considered if the condition is causing significant problems.

What are the possible problems associated with Duane's syndrome?

A very noticeable head turn, which is uncomfortable.

An exaggerated squint when looking straight ahead. Surgery would reduce the head turn and/or improve the appearance of the squint, but it would not make the eye move fully.

Occasionally, intermittent double vision may occur, usually in adulthood. If this does happen, and becomes a problem, a surgical approach may be needed, or special glasses can be used.

Contact details

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

Email: 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

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

BIOS website: 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.

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 or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

<p>To be completed by the Communications office Leaflet code: PIL202502-06-DRS Created: November 2015 / Revised: February 2025/ Review Date: February 2027</p>
--