

Why does my child need to have drops for a glasses test (refraction)?

Glasses tests in childhood are often performed using drops called 'cyclopentolate'. The action of this drop is to enable the ophthalmologist or optometrist to accurately assess how light is focussed on the back of the eye by preventing the lens inside the eye changing shape for a short period of time. This determines the glasses prescription. You will also notice that the drops make the pupil (the dark spot in the centre of the eye) bigger and this enables a good view of the back of the eye to check it is healthy.

The effects of the drops should wear off within about 6 hours. Some children complain of coldness or tingling when the drops initially go in, but this sensation disappears very quickly.

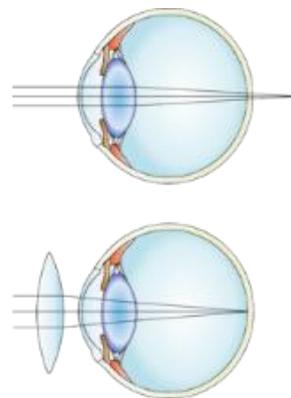
Some children with dark eyes will need additional types of drops.

Why does my child need glasses?

Most commonly, glasses are issued to improve vision. Sometimes they are required to help treat a squint (turning of the eyes).

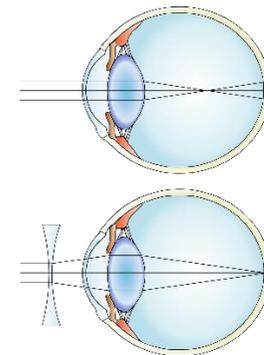
What is longsight (hypermetropia)?

Longsighted eyes are too small for the light coming in to be focussed clearly on the back of the eye. Most infants are initially longsighted but this decreases with time. Longsightedness affects near and distance vision. A magnifying lens (plus numbered, convex lens) will be needed to focus correctly.



What is shortsight (myopia)?

This is less common to see in young children and often does not appear until early teens. The eyes are too big for the light coming in to be focussed clearly on the back of the eye. It affects distance vision only. A minifying lens (minus numbered, concave lens) will be needed to focus correctly.



What is astigmatism?

Astigmatism may accompany long or short sightedness. You will see numbers in the 'Cyl' column of the prescription if this is present. It means the front of the eye is more curved in one direction than in the opposing direction, just like a rugby ball. This blurs images in a stripe.

Glasses and Refraction



For more information and help with wearing glasses, visit:
www.theglassesfairy.com

www.squintclinic.com

The Practice Ophthalmology

Telephone: 01494 690999

Email: eyes@thepracticegroup.co.uk

Where do I go to get the glasses?

Take the prescription issued to you by the optometrist/ophthalmologist to an optician (glasses shop) of your choice. The voucher entitles you to a fixed amount of money towards one pair of glasses. You can 'top up' the cost of the glasses if you wish to have a particular frame or special lenses, or if you wish to have a spare pair of glasses. Do shop around and find something that fits your child's face well so that they look through the middle of the lenses and they find comfortable to wear.

What if the glasses are broken, damaged or lost?

The voucher you are issued is valid for one year. If there is a problem with the glasses, go back to your optician who made the glasses and they should repair/replace using a GOS2(R) voucher.

My child complains things are blurry with the glasses. Why?

This is not uncommon to hear in the first few weeks. The eyes have to 'unlearn' the habits they have been used to for making the world clear. Full adaptation can take upto 4 months of full time glasses wear¹.

Is it important to keep the glasses fitting well?

Yes! Not only will this be more comfortable for your child, but it can change how the lens is working and delay treatment. This is particularly important if your child has astigmatism. Go back to the optician who made the glasses who will be able to straighten out bent frames and replace missing/poor fitting nose pads. Children with small noses/flat bridge of nose often benefit from solid plastic frames or a bridged nose piece.



¹ Moseley et al (2002), *Ophth Physiol Optics*,4:296-299