

Patient Information

For Parents of Children

having Squint Surgery

Your child has a squint (sometimes called a 'turn' or a 'lazy eye') which is noticeable even with their glasses on, so surgery has been suggested to straighten the eyes. Squint surgery does not improve the vision or remove the need for glasses.

Your child is now on the waiting list for squint surgery, and you will usually be notified of the admission date approximately three weeks before the operation. You will be asked to bring your child to the Eye Clinic for a pre-operative assessment; bring any glasses or contact lenses your child is wearing to this appointment. **Please keep this appointment as failure to attend may result in the operation being deferred.**

On the admission date, take your child to ward **C2** (the children's ward) at **Russell's Hall Hospital** at the time stated on the admission letter.

Children are usually in hospital just for the day. You will need to take the following items for your child: slippers and dressing gown, your child's favourite toy or comforter, and their preferred drinking cup or bottle. Please also take any baby foods or milk that your child may need and also any medication that your child is using. Sandwiches and light refreshments are available for parents/relatives from the cafeteria or the shop near the main entrance.

The operation

The operation will be done using a general anaesthetic. One parent will be able to accompany the child to the anaesthetic room and stay until they have gone to sleep.

The operation is done on the muscles of one or both eyes. The eye muscles are just under the white of the eye, at each side. The surgeon either strengthens or weakens the muscles according to the type of squint.

Your child's eyesight will usually not be affected by the operation, so unless you are given any other instructions by the orthoptist, encourage your child to continue wearing their glasses after the operation.

The eye will usually not be covered after the operation, but it will look red and you will usually be given ointment to use while the eye heals. The stitches may be visible, and it can take four to six weeks for them to dissolve after surgery.

Follow up care

On leaving the hospital, you will be given an appointment to attend the Eye Clinic in about three weeks' time. You will see the orthoptist, and you may also see the doctor at this visit.

Keep your child off nursery or school for at least three or four days after the operation. Then, if the wounds are healing well and your child is happy, they can go back to school. If the wounds are still sore or if the child does not seem well, you may prefer to keep them off school until you have contacted the Eye Clinic.

Your child can be given Paracetamol for pain relief if necessary (follow the instructions on the packet).

Please do not allow your child to go swimming until you have been back to the Eye Clinic to discuss this, or until a full month after the operation has passed.

Risks of squint surgery

Every operation has risks, and these are the main ones for squint surgery:

- In around one in five children, the operation has less of an effect than expected. Sometimes, the eye drifts the opposite way. Further surgery may be needed to re-align the eye, either soon after or up to many years after the initial surgery.
- Occasionally, after an operation, a child may experience some double vision. If this occurs, it usually only lasts a few days. If it persists, contact the Orthoptic Department for an earlier appointment. In older children especially, this problem may require further treatment.
- Rarely, the white of the eye is left permanently slightly pink, or occasionally with a bluish patch or scarring, though this usually fades with time.
- Very rarely, a germ enters the eye at the time of surgery. Infection in the eye can badly damage eyesight.

What if I have any problems or questions after reading this leaflet?

If there is anything you do not understand, or you are concerned or worried about any part of the treatment, contact:

The **Urgent Referral Clinic** team at Russells Hall Hospital Eye Clinic on **01384 456111 ext. 3633**.

Eye emergency, out of hours

In case of an eye emergency after the closing hours of the Eye Clinic at Russells Hall Hospital (including weekends and bank holidays), please contact the **Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre on 0121 507 4440**

The doctor on call is usually based at the Eye Centre, City Hospital, Dudley Road, Birmingham. They may need to call you back, and if necessary, they will arrange for you to visit them.

Note: the information in this booklet is provided for information only. The information found is **not** a substitute for professional medical advice or care by a qualified doctor or other health care professional. **Always** check with your doctor if you have any concerns about your condition or treatment.

This is only indicative and general information for the procedure. Individual experiences may vary and all the points may not apply to all patients at all times. Please discuss your individual circumstances with you eye doctor.

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This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.uk/services-and-wards/ophthalmology/>

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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