



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Amblyopia

Amblyopia (am-blee-OH-pee-a) is also known as "lazy eye" or "lazy vision." The vision in the amblyopic eye is weaker than the vision in the "good eye." There are many causes of amblyopia. They include misalignments, cataracts and unequal focus power between the eyes. In amblyopia, the pathway that carries the vision from the eye to the brain does not fully develop, and the brain ignores signals sent from the weaker eye. Although your child's eyes may look normal, he or she may still have "lazy eye." **The best way amblyopia can be found is with a complete eye exam.**

Treatment

Children often need glasses to treat amblyopia. They also might need surgery to correct the problem causing the amblyopia. Amblyopia is also treated by covering the "good eye" with a patch for several hours a day. This will make the "lazy eye" start working. **The patch must be worn while the child is awake. The earlier treatment is started, the better the visual outcome will be.**



Picture 1: The eye patch should be worn with the narrow end next to the nose.

It is hard to tell how long your child will need to wear an eye patch. For most children, the treatment takes several months to a year. Usually, the doctor will slowly decrease the number of hours the patch is worn until the vision stops changing.

It is **very important** to patch your child's eye as directed and to keep all follow-up appointments. The earlier "lazy eye" is treated, the easier treatment will be.

How to put on a sticky eye patch

- Remove the paper backing. The side that goes next to the skin will be sticky like a Band Aid®.
- Have your child close his or her eyes.
- Gently place the narrow end of the patch toward your child's nose (Picture 1). **If your child wears glasses, put the patch directly over the eye (glasses are worn over the patch).**
- There are also cloth patches that attach to glasses.
- Put the patch on the _____ eye for _____ hours each day. **Do not count sleeping hours as patching time.**
- Remove the patch at bedtime.

If you have trouble getting your child to keep the patch on or if you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse. You may also contact:

- Nationwide Children's Hospital Eye Clinic by phone at 614-722-4075
- The Ohio Amblyope Registry (OAR) by phone at 1-877-808-2422 (toll free)
- The OAR by e-mail at amblyopia@nationwidechildrens.org.