Eye Care and Safety

All children should have their eyes examined by a doctor by the age of 4. However, babies and children with signs of vision problems should see a doctor as soon as the problem is noticed. If vision problems are not corrected early, children can miss out on many experiences that are important in their development.

Signs of vision problems

Signs your child may have vision problems are:

- Your baby does not look at a bright toy or faces by 3 months of age.
- Your baby’s eyes shake or vibrate.
- Your baby stares at lights.
- One or both eyes turn out or turn in (Picture 1).
  Note: Babies do not "outgrow" crossed eyes.
- Shutting or covering an eye.
- Frequent squinting, blinking or rubbing the eyes.
- Headaches or tiredness after doing close work.
- Your child tilts his head up, down or to the side.

Children normally have clear eyes and only a little discharge from them after sleeping. If your child's eyes show any of these signs, he or she may have an eye problem:

- Red, watery eyes
- Crusting in eyelashes
- Burning or itching eyes
- Cloudiness, either on the front of the eye or inside the eye
- Frequent styes (small, painful pimples on the eyelids)
Eye safety

- Children suffer eye injury and even blindness from unsafe toys and objects.
- Parents should teach their children good eye safety habits. Most eye injuries can be prevented through proper safety techniques and use of protective eye wear.
- Parents should watch and limit the use of sharp objects. Keep young children away from sharp and dangerous objects. Keep chemicals, sprays, laundry and dishwasher pods out of the reach of small children.
- Always avoid BB guns, pellet guns, darts and projectile toys. Do not allow children anywhere near fireworks, especially bottle rockets.
- As children get older, make sure they wear safety glasses in shop and auto mechanic classes. Children should wear sports protective eye wear made with polycarbonate lenses for baseball, basketball, racquetball, soccer, hockey, lacrosse and paintball.

If you have any questions, please call the Nationwide Children’s Hospital Eye Clinic at (614) 722-4075.