



Left image: in-turning (convergent) squint

Right image: out-turning (divergent) squint

Is it common?

Strabismus affects 5-8% of children (1-2 in every 30).

How can the doctor tell?

Tests are usually carried out by an orthoptist who is trained to identify conditions such as strabismus. The orthoptist might shine a light in your eyes and see if the reflection of the light is in the same place in both eyes or not. They also cover each of your eyes in turn and see if one eye has to straighten up to see things.

Getting it sorted

People with a squint should be tested in the eye clinic as soon as possible after it is detected, especially young children where the sight in the affected eye may gradually get worse. Some squints might get better as you get older and not all squints need treatment.

There are several types of treatment available:

- If you have a glasses prescription, glasses might help your sight or squint
- You might need to wear a patch over your good eye, to encourage

the eye with the squint to work harder and see better

- Some squints can be treated with eye exercises
- Some squints need surgery

Surgery for a squint involves moving the muscles attached to the outside of the eye to a new position. It might be necessary to operate on both eyes in order to 'balance' them, even if the squint is only in one eye. Some squints need more than one operation.

When the going gets tough

A complication that can develop if a squint is left untreated is amblyopia (lazy eye). This happens when vision in the eye with a squint gradually gets worse because the brain starts to ignore the weaker message being sent from that eye. Patching the good eye can make the vision in the bad one better, but it doesn't work as well after the age of seven/eight years and by then it is often not possible to correct the vision.

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Moorfields Direct telephone helpline
Phone: 020 7566 2345
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm





Saturday, 9am-5pm
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325
Email: moorfields.pals@nhs.net
Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs