

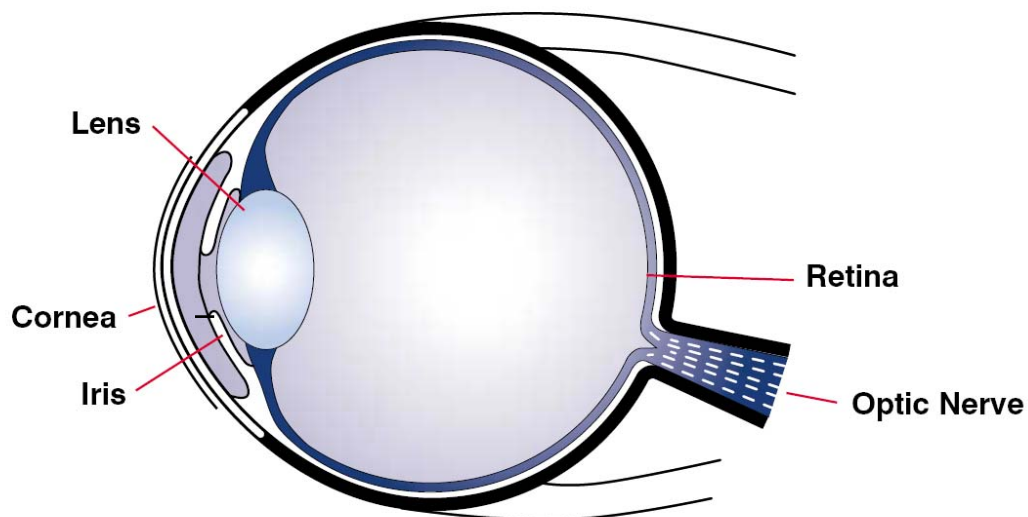
AMBLYOPIA

What we see is in fact made in the brain. The brain makes sight from signals given to it by the eyes.

What is the normal structure of the eye?

The eye is made of three parts.

- A light focusing part at the front (cornea and lens).
- A light sensitive film at the back of the eye (retina).
- A large collection of communication wires to the brain (optic nerve).



What is Amblyopia?

It is reduced vision that is not corrected by glasses and is not caused by any disease of the eye.

It may be caused by:

- a) a squint
- b) unequal glasses prescription
- c) conditions which prevent light from entering the eye
eg. cataract and ptosis (droopy eyelid)

How does this affect the way my child sees?

Usually one eye has normal vision, so with both eyes open, your child should **not** have a problem.

The treatment for amblyopia is usually patching of the good eye. When the patch is worn, your child is forced to use their weaker eye and this may result in visual problems during the time that the patch is on. Patching will only work when the child is young enough to be developing vision, usually before 7 or 8 years of age.

What can be done to help?

It is very important that the weaker eye is stimulated in order to improve the vision. It is recommended that whilst the patch is worn, your child should do lots of close work e.g. drawing, reading schoolwork etc.

Your child does not need larger print than normal, as this will stop the vision from improving as quickly.

How can parents, family, friends and teachers make a difference?

Ensure that your child wears their patch for the prescribed length of time every day.

Encourage and reassure your child when the patch is on, as they may find tasks difficult when using the weaker eye.

Allow extra time for them to complete tasks/school work.

Teachers should be tolerant of untidy presentation of work/writing particularly at the start of patching treatment.

Be aware that your child's field of vision (peripheral vision) may be reduced on the side of the patch and that they may bump into objects when wearing their patch. They may also be more clumsy.

As the vision improves, your child will find things easier.

Useful contacts.



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RNIB

Tel: 0845 766 9999

LOOK (or families with visually impaired children)

Tel: 0121 428 5038

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www.eyeconditions.org.uk

Your Orthoptist.

This information is intended to describe most aspects of the condition but each child is different and there will always be exceptions.

Acknowledgements

This leaflet was compiled by a multidisciplinary team from the eye departments at Birmingham Children's Hospital and Birmingham Heartlands Hospital, Birmingham Focus on Blindness and Birmingham Specialist Support Services.