

# Anterior Uveitis in Children

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This material will help you understand anterior uveitis, also known as iritis, its causes, and how it may be treated.

## What is anterior uveitis?

Uveitis occurs when the uvea becomes inflamed. The uvea is the middle layer of the eye, including structures such as the iris, ciliary body, and choroid. Anterior uveitis involves the front part of the eye. It can also be referred to as iritis. The iris is the colored part of the eye that is brown, gray, blue or green. When the uvea or the iris becomes inflamed, cells collect and float around this part of the eye. These cells can cause your child to have blurry vision, eye pain, redness, and photosensitivity. In some cases, children with uveitis do not complain of any symptoms.

## What causes anterior uveitis?

Anterior uveitis may be caused by trauma or infection. Certain systematic conditions (those that affect the entire body) may also lead to anterior uveitis. Some examples include: Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA), ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, nephritis or reactive arthritis. The condition is also associated with leukemia and Kawasaki syndrome. In many cases, the cause of anterior uveitis is unknown.

## How is anterior uveitis treated?

Anterior uveitis may cause scarring in the eye or lead to other conditions (i.e. corneal deposits, glaucoma) that can cause vision loss. For this reason it should be treated as soon as possible. Treatment usually includes medication in the form of topical and/or oral steroids and cycloplegic drops. All work to

reduce swelling and help relieve pain. Treatment of the underlying cause (if one exists) may include medications to suppress the immune system.

Depending on the cause, treatment may also include antibiotics or antivirals. Dark glasses may also be worn if your child's eyes are sensitive to light.

Children with JIA are more likely to develop anterior uveitis. They often have few or no symptoms. If your child has JIA, he/she should have regular eye examinations to screen for uveitis.

With proper treatment, most cases of anterior uveitis go away within a few weeks. But it is common for the condition to return. See your child's doctor if symptoms return after successful treatment.

**For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.**



<http://www.kellogg.umich.edu/patientcare/conditions/uveitis.html>



<http://www.aapos.org/terms/conditions/62>

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