



# Eye Patching Tips

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This material will help you understand eye patching.

## **What is eye patching?**

Eye patching is a treatment for amblyopia or lazy eye. This is a condition when one eye does not develop normal eyesight. Patching of the dominant (good) eye helps the weak eye get stronger. The treatment works very well when patching instructions are carefully followed. The best time to use eye patching to correct amblyopia is during early childhood.

## **What kind of eye patch should my child use?**

The best kind of eye patch is an orthoptic patch with adhesive on the back. This type of patch is similar to a Band-Aid®. They come in different sizes and colors. You should put the patch directly on your child's skin around his/her eye. Some kids are sensitive to the adhesive. If your child has this problem, you can try using a different brand of patches. You can also try putting a lubricant (like lotion) or Milk of Magnesia on their skin. Milk of Magnesia is a liquid that reduces the skin's contact with adhesive. Cover the skin around your child's eye with it. Wait for it to dry into a powder and then put on the eye patch.

Another type of patches is made of cloth. If your child wears glasses, you can put a cloth patch over his/her glasses. For the patch to work well the glasses should fit tightly and the cloth should not have any holes. "Pirate patches" usually do not fit close enough to be effective.

## **How often does my child need to use an eye patch?**

Your child should wear an eye patch for either full or part-time during the day. Talk to your child's eye doctor about how many hours he/she recommends.

## **When should my child wear an eye patch?**

It does not matter when your child wears an eye patch. As long as your child is awake and has his/her eyes open, wearing an eye patch can strengthen your child's weak eye. There are often questions about whether children should patch at school or at home. At home, children are under the care of parents or other family who may be more vigilant about monitoring patching than is possible at school. On the other hand, patching during school may give your child and classmates an opportunity to learn about accepting differences between children. Every child is unique and parents should be flexible in choosing when to schedule patching.

## **What if my child does not want to wear an eye patch?**

It is very common for children to refuse to wear an eye patch. It may take a lot of encouragement from family, friends, and teachers for your child not to remove the patch. You can consider rewarding your child if he/she keeps the patch on for the necessary amount of time. You can also let your child choose the color and pattern of his/her eye patch. You can also try patching during your child's favorite activities. Some kids are more willing to wear patches while they are watching TV or playing games.

## **How long does it take for eye patching to work?**

Your child's vision may improve a few weeks after starting patching. It may take many months for the best results. Your child's eye doctor will monitor your child's vision closely during and after eye patching. Your child's eye

doctor may recommend that he/she occasionally uses eye patching even after his/her vision has improved. This will help make sure your child's eyesight does not get worse.

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



<http://www.aapos.org/terms/conditions/21>



<http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/amblyopia-lazy-eye/treatment.cfm>

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