Strabismus

This material will help you understand strabismus and how it is treated.

What is strabismus?
Strabismus is a condition when the eyes are not lined up properly. It is common among children, but can also develop in adults. You may notice that your child's eyes point in different directions. You may also notice that your child closes one eye or tilts his/her head. This may help your child’s eyes work together. There are many different kinds of strabismus. Common types are esotropia, exotropia, and hypertropia. Esotropia is when one or both eyes turn inward. Exotropia is when one or both eyes turn outward. Hypertropia is when one eye turns upward.

How does strabismus affect my child’s vision?
Eye misalignment can cause amblyopia or weak vision in an eye. When the eyes are oriented in different directions the brain receives two different images. The brain may ignore the input from the misaligned eye to avoid double vision, resulting in poor visual development in that eye. Misaligned eyes may also cause problems with stereopsis or perception of depth and 3-D.

What causes strabismus?
Eye muscles and the brain work together to point the eyes. Some children with strabismus have a brain disorder. Other children have a cataract (cloudiness in the eye’s lense). Many children, however, do not have any of these conditions and the exact cause is unknown.
How is strabismus treated?

Treatment depends on your child’s age and his/her type of strabismus. Some treatments include:

- Glasses
- Patching of the strong eye
- Prisms
- Eye exercises
- Surgery

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