

# Exotropia in Adults

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This material will help you understand exotropia and how to manage it.

## **What is exotropia?**

Exotropia is a type of eye misalignment (known as strabismus) that occurs when one or both of the eyes turn outward. This can be constant or only happen sometimes. Many people have a tendency for their eyes to drift out when they are day dreaming or staring off into space. If the eyes are easily able to refocus, this is called exophoria. In some cases, over time, the outward turn may happen more often to the point where it becomes constant. In exotropia, the eyes do not realign. Some people notice their vision becomes blurry or they have double vision when their eye points outward while others have no symptoms. Most often, those people who have no symptoms have poor vision in one eye and/or one eye has turned outwards for a long time. When a person has an exotropia without double vision, they do not have depth perception as they are really only using the eye that can focus straight ahead to see.

## **What causes exotropia?**

Some people have exotropia from childhood, called a “lazy eye.” Others develop it as an adult due to a medical condition like a stroke or thyroid disease. Others develop it as an adult when one eye loses vision. The eye with poor vision can wander.

## **How is exotropia treated?**

Treatment for exotropia depends on how often you have symptoms and on how severe they are. Prism in your glasses may be prescribed to help with double vision. Eye muscle surgery is also an option, especially if your exotropia is

constant or is causing double vision. If your exotropia has been present since childhood, surgically correcting the misalignment will not improve your depth perception, but it can improve your appearance. This is because depth perception can only develop until age nine.

Your eye doctor will discuss which option is best for you.

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



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



<http://www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/strabismus.cfm>

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