

Patching treatment for amblyopia

Your child has been recommended to use a patch to improve their vision and correct amblyopia (a lazy eye).

Which eye and how long should my child wear it?

PATCH	RIGHT / LEFT	EYE
FOR _____ HOURS PER DAY		

What has caused the lazy eye?

A lazy eye (or ‘amblyopia’) occurs when the vision in one eye is disadvantaged during the critical development of eyesight in early childhood.

Does wearing a patch work?

- Wearing a patch (known as ‘patching’) can work if your child wears the patch as instructed. It is worn over the stronger eye to stimulate the weaker eye to improve.
- In most cases, the younger the age at which the patch is worn, the more successful it will be.
- Consistency in patching is important.
- If left untreated, your child will have permanently reduced vision, which cannot be corrected once they are older.

How should patching be carried out?

- The orthoptist will have told you which eye to patch and for how long the patch should be worn each day.
- Try to ensure the patch is worn as instructed until the next visit.
- Do not be tempted to put the patch on for longer than required, as it is possible to over-do patching
- The best time to patch is when your child is awake and preferably doing detailed work, such as drawing, reading, playing with small toys or, if your child is very young, at meal times.
- Your child may like to watch TV while wearing the patch – they may need to sit a little closer to see – this will not be harmful to your child’s eyes.

- If your child's vision is very poor, give them big bright toys and games to play with while wearing the patch, so that the toys can be seen easily.
- Try to put the patch on the face rather than over the glasses – children are very good at peeping through the tiniest holes to see with their better eye.

How can you encourage your child to wear the patch?

- Make it fun – but be firm – explain to the child why they need to wear the patch – encourage with patch charts (or rewards if necessary).
- Enlist support from others. Try to distract your child and keep them busy.
- **Don't give up.** Once the vision in the lazy eye starts to improve, children usually do not struggle as much wearing the patch.

If your child complains of itchy skin or the patch causes skin irritation, **stop using the eye patch and contact the Orthoptic Department** on the number on the cover – there may be alternative patches available to you.

Contact us

If you have any questions, please ring us on 0118 322 7681
Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 4.30pm.
Orthoptic Department
Level 2 Eye Block
Royal Berkshire Hospital

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Orthoptic Department, October 2023
Next review due: October 2025