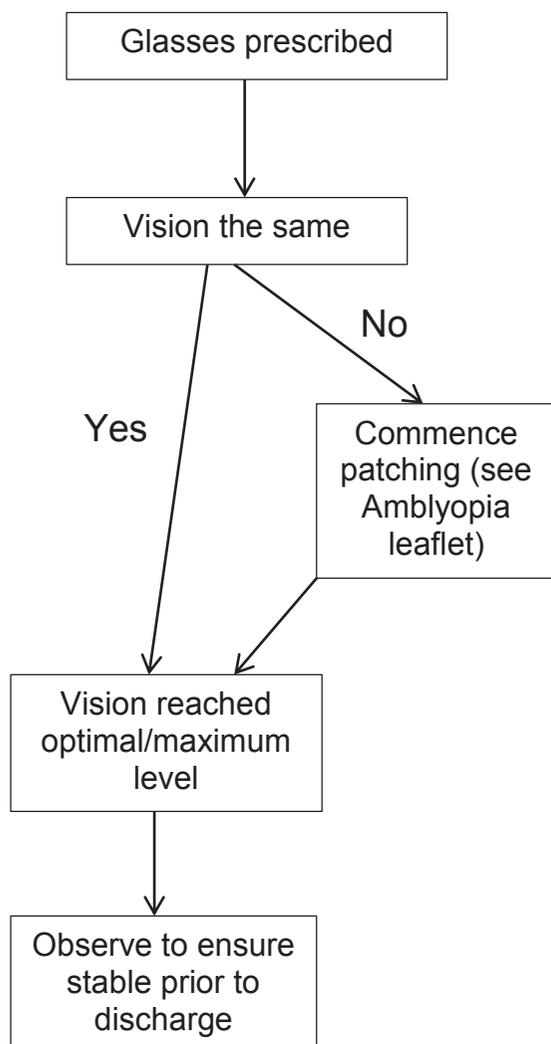


Wearing glasses pathway



This leaflet is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone 01270 612437.

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Wearing Glasses Patient Information

1. Introduction to glasses for children

The first part of your child's eye examination is often carried out by an Orthoptist, who will check the vision in each eye, muscle balance and 3D vision. If the Orthoptist finds a problem or parents are concerned, a refraction (glasses test) is advised. This is carried out by an Optometrist (optician) or Ophthalmologist (eye doctor).

2. How to test your child for glasses

In order to accurately test for glasses, most children have eye drops put in. The drops relax the focussing muscles of the eye and dilate the pupils. The Optometrist holds lenses in front of each eye and using an instrument called a retinoscope, will shine a light into the eye to work out the prescription. As the eye grows and changes shape, the prescription changes and so the glasses test is repeated at regular intervals.



3. Why are glasses needed?

Long-sight (hypermetropia):

It is normal for children to be slightly long-sighted. Glasses are prescribed if the prescription is outside the normal range for the child's age or there is a squint or reduced vision. Long-sight occurs when the eye is too small, so the rays of light entering the eye focus behind it. Both near and distance vision are affected.

Short-sight (myopia):

Short-sight occurs when the eye is too long, so the rays of light entering the eye focus before they reach the back of the eye. It affects distance more than near vision.

Astigmatism:

Astigmatism occurs when the front of the eye is shaped like a rugby ball, with two different curvatures. It affects near and distance vision and is often combined with long or short sight.

Anisometropia:

Anisometropia is a difference in the prescription of the two eyes. One eye requires a stronger lens than the other to focus. Often the vision in the eye with the stronger lens is weaker and patching may be required.

4. How much should the glasses be worn?

Glasses should be worn full time, especially during the critical period of vision development (up until about seven years) to maximise the vision potential.

Most children adapt to their glasses quickly. Initially your child may not notice a difference when wearing glasses for the first time, but once the vision starts to develop normally, they will be happier to wear them.

Before wearing glasses, children who are longsighted naturally over focus to try to see clearly. It can take a while for them to relax their focusing and see clearly through them.

It is important that the glasses fit correctly to ensure your child looks through the centre of the lens, to avoid any peeping. This will help to get the maximum benefit from glasses wear.