



East Suffolk and
North Essex
NHS Foundation Trust

Children's Squint Surgery

***Orthoptic Department
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(DPS: 04301-18)





What is a squint?

A squint is a condition in which the eyes are not aligned. An eye can turn in, out, up or down and a squint can be in one eye or both eyes.

To find out more, you may like to visit the website www.squintclinic.com

Why does my child need a squint operation?

Your child is coming into hospital for a squint operation to put their eyes in a straighter position. If your child is already wearing glasses before the operation they will need to continue to wear them afterwards. The operation does not improve your child's vision, this is only achieved by glasses and patching.

Risks and benefits of squint surgery

Benefits: Improved appearance/symptoms.

Risks: The squint may be over or under corrected and may need further surgery.

Occasionally double vision may be noticed after surgery. This is almost always temporary but, if persistent, further management may be required.

What happens before the operation?

- You will have already discussed the operation with the ophthalmologist and orthoptist and your child will have been placed on a waiting list.
- Close to the operation date you will be asked to come to the hospital with your child for a pre-operative appointment to re-measure the squint, discuss any problems or queries with the ophthalmologist, have a medical check and visit the ward where your child will be staying.



- You will be asked to sign a consent form allowing the operation to take place and the ophthalmologist will tell you which eye they will be operating on. You will be given a date, time and the name of the ward to report to on the day of the operation.
- Your child will need a general anaesthetic.

What happens on the day of the operation?

- You and your child will need to come to the ward at the time indicated on your letter.
- **If your child is having a morning operation,** he or she should not eat anything from midnight on the day of their operation, but can have clear fluids (water or squash) at 6 am.
- **If your child is having an afternoon operation,** he or she may have a light breakfast at 7 am and drink clear fluids (water or squash) between 7 am and 11 am.
- The nurse will admit your child and then some of the doctors involved in your child's operation will come to see you.
- The nurse will put some anaesthetic cream on the back of your child's hand and shortly afterwards they will be taken to the operating theatre. You can remain with your child at all times until they are on the operating table and then you will be taken back to the ward.



What happens during the operation?

- The anaesthetist will send your child to sleep with a general anaesthetic.
- The operation takes about an hour to perform and it will always be performed or supervised by a consultant ophthalmologist.
- The ophthalmologist will move the muscles on the side of your child's eye to a new position. This usually involves shortening and/or changing the position of the eye muscles, using dissolvable stitches.
- When your child wakes up, the nurse will bring him or her back to the ward.

Will my child be in pain after the operation?

Your child will experience some discomfort or pain after the operation. Pain relief is given in theatre but the nurse can give your child something further to relieve the pain if necessary. You should have your child's normal pain relief medication available at home.

When can my child go home?

If your child has not been sick they can go home 2–4 hours after the operation, but you will have been advised to bring an overnight bag as a precaution.



How will my child's eye look after the operation?

- The white part of the operated eye may look pink/red after surgery. This will gradually disappear.
- Very occasionally, your child may experience bleeding and/or a swollen eyelid after the operation which resolves after a few hours.
- No dressing or eye pad is worn.
- Your child will be prescribed some eye drops to put in the operated eye(s). Please use as instructed.
- It can take up to six weeks after the operation to see the full result of the surgery. Occasionally a further operation may be required.

What follow-up appointments does my child need after the operation?

Your child will be given a post-operative follow-up appointment in the Eye Clinic, two weeks after the operation to see the orthoptist and ophthalmologist. It is very important that you keep this appointment so that we can check that your child's eye is healing well.

Your child will then need routine appointments to continue to monitor his or her vision and squint.



What do I need to do when I get home?

- Put the eye drops in as instructed.
- Keep your child off school or nursery for one week.
- Do not let your child go swimming for a month as this may irritate the operated eye.
- Avoid getting shampoo in your child's eyes.
- Keep the follow-up appointment with the Eye Clinic.

In the event of a problem, or if you would like some further advice, please ring the Orthoptic Department on **01473 703663** between 8.30am and 5pm. Outside these hours contact the hospital switchboard on **01473 712233** and ask to speak to the ophthalmologist on call.



Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

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