



SHOULD YOUR CHILD GO FOR **AN EYE EXAMINATION?**

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Good vision is key to a child's physical and mental development. If a child's visual system is not fully developed, their visual potential will be limited and will not be able to be corrected fully at a later stage of life. A child should be examined if they are noted to be having difficulty seeing far or near, having learning difficulties, or noted to be squinting (crossed eyes).



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EYE EXAMINATION AND VISION SCREENING... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



Eye examination

- 1 A more complete and comprehensive examination involving the use of eye drops to dilate the pupil, enabling more thorough investigation of the overall health of the eye.
- 2 Usually takes at least 30 minutes to 1 hour.



Vision screening

- 1 It's merely just looking at visual acuity—a very simple vision test—to gauge how much or how well a child can see.
- 2 Usually takes less than 5 minutes,

WHAT ARE THE COMMON ILLNESSES THAT CAN BE DETECTED VIA AN EYE EXAMINATION?

- Eye lid problems (ptosis or droopy eye lids, epiblepharon or misdirection of growing of the eye lash towards the eye)
- Abnormalities of the cornea
- Lens problems (cataract)
- Retinal abnormalities (retinal detachment, optic nerve abnormalities)
- Squint (crossed eyes)
- Refractive errors (nearsightedness, shortsightedness and astigmatism)

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE EXAMINATION?

Usually there will be medication to be dripped into the eyes for dilation of the pupils, to enable the doctor to examine the posterior part of the eye. There will be a bright light shone into the eye, which may cause some discomfort but is not harmful to the child.

AT WHAT AGE SHOULD CHILDREN GO FOR AN EYE EXAMINATION?

At birth

The newborn will be examined by a paediatrician for screening purposes. The paediatrician will look for eye abnormalities such as congenital cataract, eye tumour (retinoblastoma), retinal detachment, and blood vessel abnormalities such as Coat's disease.

Infancy (6 months to 1 year)

The child's eyes should be checked for squints. They should also undergo general screening in case of late development of congenital eye abnormalities.

3 to 5 years old

The child's vision should be checked by an ophthalmologist or trained optometrist to detect amblyopia or lazy eyes as well as for other routine eye examinations.

7 to 18 years old

The child's visual acuity should be checked again, as this is the age when nearsightedness (myopia) most commonly occur. Myopia can be corrected with glasses.

