

Other patching options

At times it can be difficult to keep the patch on, no matter how much you try. When this is the case Atropine eye drops may be recommended.

Please note that this is dependent on the clinician.

Atropine works in a similar way to patching. The eye drop is used to dilate the pupil in the good eye to blur their near vision. As a result your child will automatically use their weaker eye to see.

Atropine drops can be a good alternative if:

- Your child is prone to removing the patch
- Patch is irritating the skin
- Your child has nystagmus
- Psychosocial issues with wearing a patch

Follow up appointments

Usually we aim to see patients every 8-12 weeks depending on compliance, level of vision and age of patient.

School Screening

All children are entitled to a vision check in junior infants. This test is performed by the public health nurses.

You will be informed of this check-up and can ask for your child to not be assessed. We advise that all children are assessed as children do not always communicate that they have reduced vision.

The results of the test are highlighted and if there are any concerns your child will be referred into our service.



Why Does My Child Need an Eye Patch?



What is a patch used for?

Patches are used as a form of amblyopia treatment.

Amblyopia is the term used to describe reduced vision in one or both eyes. There can be many reasons your child has amblyopia but the most common causes are:

1. **Strabismus (squint) in one eye**
2. **A difference in glasses prescription, where one eye requires a stronger lens than the other.**

Every child will have a glasses test and a fundus (back of the eye) check before any patching treatment is recommended.

If your child has been prescribed their first pair of glasses, they must wear the glasses all the time.

Once your child has been wearing their glasses well, the clinician can then determine if patching is needed.

How does the patch work?

The patch is worn over the child's good eye to allow the weaker eye to develop.

It is really important to listen to the advice given about the patch as it must be worn over the correct eye for a certain amount of time.

Your clinician will give you a leaflet clarifying which eye to cover and for how long.

“The patch has not worked as I can still see the turn in the eye”

This is a very common phrase we hear in the eye clinic.

The aim of the patch is only to improve the vision in the weaker eye and therefore, will have very little impact on the turn in the eye.

Why does my child have to wear a patch now, can it not be done later in life?

Visual development takes place up to the age of 8 years old.

During this time, it is incredibly important that amblyopia is detected and corrected.

If vision is not improved during this stage, the level of vision they currently possess will be maintained as they grow older and is unlikely to improve. Therefore, it is very important that the patch is worn as prescribed.

