

Referral to the Optometrist (Optician) or Ophthalmologist

Following your recent visit to see the Orthoptist, it was considered advisable to check your child to see if glasses are required and to check the health of their eyes. This will involve a visit to the hospital to see the Hospital Optometrist (Optician), the Doctor, or aboth. In order to perform this assessment the Orthoptist will instil drops in your child's eyes.

The Eye Drops

After the initial assessment the eye drops, cyclopentolate hydrochloride, will be instilled by the Orthoptist. These drops are essential to make the pupils large and to stop the child focussing during the test. This will enable the optometrist to accurately assess whether glasses are needed, the strength of lenses required and the health of the eyes. Your child may experience some mild temporary discomfort as the drops are administered but this quickly wears off. The drops take 30 minutes to work but there is a play area available to help pass the time.

The effect of the drops

Your child may notice that their vision becomes blurred, especially looking for near, and they may also be more sensitive to light, therefore a hat or sunglasses may be needed if it is a sunny day. If your child attends school they will be able to return, but the teachers should be advised that close work may be difficult.

In most children the effect of the drops will have worn off within 24 hours, but by the next morning you should notice the pupils beginning to return to normal. The blurring effect should wear off more quickly.

Side effects of the drops

It is very rare to experience any problems with these drops, however, very occasionally a child may demonstrate an allergic reaction. This involves the child becoming hot with localised flushing of the face. This effect would occur during your visit to the Eye Unit and staff would be on hand to help.

The Test

Once the drops have worked your child will be seen by an Optometrist (Optician). This involves looking at some bright lights and wearing some special glasses or looking through lenses. They will not be expected to say which lenses are better or worse, in fact this test can be performed even if the child falls asleep.

These checks will tell us whether he/she needs to wear glasses. If so, you may be given a form to take to an outside Optometrist (Optician) who will supply the glasses, or there will be a dispensing service at the hospital for some patients.

Be prepared for the whole visit to take up to two hours, longer if seeing the Ophthalmologist.

If you have any questions please telephone the Orthoptic Department on 01392 406031.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by Royal Devon staff undertaking procedures at the Royal Devon hospitals.

© Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Designed by Graphics (Print & Design), RD&E (Heavitree)