

Information for patients

Pseudo squint –Answers to some common questions

The Orthoptic Department

What is a Pseudo squint?

A pseudo squint or pseudo strabismus is where there is an appearance of a turned eye, horizontally or vertically, but in fact the eyes are working perfectly normally together.

In some children and babies a pseudo squint can appear to be present most of the time, however, in others it can be intermittent, for example only when looking to the sides.

What causes a Pseudo squint?

The most common cause of a pseudo squint is a wide nasal bridge, where folds of skin (Epicanthus) make it appear as though one or both eyes are turning inwards. In which case the turn looks worse when children look to their left or right.



Above is an example of a pseudo squint. There are deep set eyes, with normal symmetrical reflections from the light, but the left eye looks slightly nearer the nose.

Below is an example of a real left inward squint. See how the light reflection is on the outer edge of the pupil in the left eye (the eye on the right in the photograph) and central in the right eye.



Other causes of pseudo squint can be a wide or narrow distance between the eyes (Interpupillary distance), eyelid droop (Ptosis), shape of the eyes and different coloured irides (Heterochromia) for example.

Will my child grow out of a Pseudo squint?

Usually yes. As a child grows their facial bones, including the nose, will broaden and gradually reduce the folds of skin. This change in the nasal bridge will uncover the white inner part of the eye (sclera) making the iris (coloured part) appear more central. However, in some cases, differences between the eyes may still give rise to a slight pseudo squint, such as eye colour in Heterochromia.

Will my child need treatment?

No, since the eyes are working normally.

Will my child need monitoring?

Yes. It is important for children to have regular vision checks as their eyes are still developing. Even though no squint was found today, as children start to focus a lot more, squints can develop. An appointment might be arranged by your Orthoptist to be reviewed in the hospital, or you might be discharged to the care of your local Optometrist for ongoing observation.

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