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Information for Patients

Squint Surgery

The Orthoptic Department

Squint Surgery

You are considering surgery for you or your child to correct a squint (an eye which turns in, out or drifts upwards or downwards).

While on the waiting list for squint surgery the Orthoptist will see you at regular intervals to measure how much the eye turns and monitor for any changes. Glasses should be worn as advised.

It is important that all appointments are kept. If you do not attend an appointment, your position on the waiting list may be affected.

The operation will be carried out as a day case procedure under general anaesthetic and will involve staying in hospital for approximately half a day. Occasionally it is necessary for patients to stay overnight.

Aim of surgery:

- To improve the cosmetic appearance of the eyes (not necessarily to make them 'straight').
- To improve the ability of the two eyes to work together as a pair. It is not always possible to achieve this.
- In the case of older children/adults, to relieve symptoms such as double vision.
- To relieve an uncomfortable head position.

Points to remember:

- Squint surgery will not improve vision. If glasses are worn, they will still be needed following surgery.
- If your child is using a patch or Atropine drops to treat a lazy eye, this may still be necessary after surgery.
- The amount of surgery will be based on the size of the squint with glasses, if worn. There may still be a noticeable squint without glasses. **Please bring your glasses on the day of surgery.**

- If you wear contact lenses, these cannot be worn for 6 weeks following surgery. Ensure you have glasses to use on the day of surgery and the following 6 weeks.
- If you have a prism in your glasses the strength of the prism will have to be altered after surgery.
- Occasionally more than one operation is required. Further surgery may be needed if the squint becomes larger in the future.

The surgical procedure:

The surgeon will operate on the muscles that move the eye by altering their position (to weaken them) or shortening them (to strengthen them). This may be done on:

- One or two muscles of one eye.
- One muscle in each eye. This may mean surgery is performed on the 'good' eye.
- Occasionally three or four muscles are operated on at the same time. If 'Adjustable Squint Surgery' is required, this will be discussed with you.

Following surgery:

- The white part of the eye will look red and swollen for 2-3 weeks. This will subside with time but can take several months to completely resolve. The stitches may be visible and can take 4-6 weeks to dissolve.
- Occasionally the white of the eye is left permanently pink. This is more likely to occur following a second operation on the same muscle.
- Some patients may experience double vision. This usually fades after a couple of weeks but if it persists, contact the Orthoptic Clinic.
- A week off work/school may be necessary.
- Avoid swimming for 6 weeks.
- Contact lenses should not be worn for 6 weeks.
- An appointment with the Orthoptist will be given in 2-3 weeks.

It is also important to attend appointments after the surgery, to monitor the success of the surgery and to discuss any further treatment that may be necessary.

Mae'r daflen hon hefyd ar gael yn y Gymraeg