

Young Person Squint Surgery

Information for families

What is squint surgery?

During squint surgery the eye muscles are adjusted to make them stronger or weaker, thus re-positioning the eyes in relation to each other. The surgery is performed under general anaesthetic as a day-case procedure on the Eye Unit at Maidstone Hospital.

Squint surgery may be recommended for young people who have a very noticeable squint. Surgery may also be recommended to help correct double vision.

Does squint surgery have any risks or complications?

As with all surgery, there are risks, the most common being:

- **Under-correction:** sometimes the results of surgery may not be as good as expected; further surgery may be required
- **Over-correction:** the eyes may turn slightly the other way, but this may improve in the first few months after surgery

The very rare, but serious, risks of squint surgery are:

- **Double vision:** this may well improve in the first few months after surgery
- **Eyesight problems:** eyesight problems from the actual surgery are very rare
- **A 'slipped muscle':** if the muscle fails to attach properly to the eye immediately after the surgery another operation will be needed
- **Complications associated with anaesthetics**

What happens before I am admitted?

You will attend a clinic at Maidstone Hospital about two weeks before their operation. You will be seen by the orthoptist and the surgeon. If you are under 16 years old you will then visit the Riverbank unit and meet the nurses there. You, or your parents or guardian will be asked to sign a consent form. If you have any concerns or questions you can discuss these at the clinic.

What happens on the day of surgery?

If you are under 16 you will be admitted to the Riverbank Unit on the day of surgery. The anaesthetist will examine you and talk to you about the operation. For a period of time before the anaesthetic, normally six hours, you will not be able to eat or drink anything. If you wish, one parent or guardian will be able to accompany you into the anaesthetic room until you fall asleep.

What will happen during surgery?

Surgery is performed with the eye remaining in its socket. The operation may take up to an hour and a half with you asleep, after which time your parents or guardians will be able to come and look after you. You may have a pad placed over your eye immediately after surgery. It is only in place to protect the eye from you accidentally scratching it and will be removed when you have woken up. It will not be replaced with a dressing as these can increase the risk of infection.

Your eye will be red, your eyelids may be slightly red and swollen, and your tears may be pink. This is quite normal.

How long will I be in hospital?

After the operation, if you are well and able to eat and drink you will be able to go home. However, if you are unwell, you may need to remain in hospital overnight; this does not happen very often.

When will I be able to resume normal activities?

- You will not be able to go swimming for up to four weeks following the operation.
- You should try to avoid getting dirt in the eye for up to two weeks following the operation.
- You can help the eye heal by backwashing your hair and trying not to rub your eye.

Will I need any drops or ointment?

You will be given drops or ointment to put in your operated eye for up to four weeks after squint surgery. Initially drops should be applied three times a day but will be tailed off as the eye heals.

It may be easier to ask your parent or guardian to do this. Make sure they always thoroughly wash their hands before applying eye-drops or ointment. If necessary use cooled, boiled water to bathe the eye. Paracetamol can be taken to relieve any pain or discomfort.

What about school or college?

You may return to school or college one week after surgery, but may feel you need a second week off.

What about my glasses?

If you already wear glasses you will need to continue wearing them after the operation unless you are advised otherwise.

After the operation

- The stitches on the surface of the eye dissolve so do not need to be removed.
- It is quite normal for the eye to be red for several weeks following the operation.
- You will be given a follow up appointment with the orthoptist and doctor one to three weeks after surgery.
- If you or your parents or guardians have any questions about your appointments or treatment, please contact one of the orthoptic departments on the front of this leaflet.

What to watch out for after you go home

If you are in a lot of pain, if your eye becomes redder, or if it will not open, please contact the Rapid Access Service (contact details are on the back page).



Please use this space to write any notes or questions you may have.





Contact details

Rapid Access Service ☎ 01622 226228
(Eye Department, Maidstone Hospital)

Clinic contacts

Maidstone Orthoptic Clinic ☎ 01622 226236

TWH Orthoptic Clinic ☎ 01892 63389

Email mtw-tr-.PemburyOrthoptics@nhs.net

Medway Orthoptic Clinic ☎ 01634 830000
ext 5792

Sittingbourne Orthoptic Clinic ☎ 01795 418300

For further help or advice please contact

- Your GP
- NHS 111 ☎ 111
- NHS Choices on line www.nhs.uk

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the PALS Team. We will do our best to arrange this.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you would like to raise any concerns, make comments and suggestions or require information on Trust services, you can contact **PALS**. Office opening times are Monday to Friday 10.00am to 4.00pm. Both offices offer a 24 hour answering machine. Messages will be responded to within one working day, so please do leave a contact number.

PALS Maidstone Hospital ☎ 01622 224960

PALS Tunbridge Wells ☎ 01892 632953

PALS Email mtwpals@nhs.net

PALS SMS ☎ 07747 782317

PALS Maidstone Fax ☎ 01622 224843

PALS Tunbridge Wells Fax ☎ 01892 632954

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