

Paediatric information

Childhood glaucoma: 8-12 year olds

Glaucoma means that the pressure in the eye is too high. The high pressure damages the nerve which takes vision information from the eyes to the brain. When that happens, children with glaucoma cannot see very well.

Sometimes eye drops help or the doctors can do operations to bring the pressure down. When you have glaucoma, you need to have the pressure in your eyes checked regularly for all your life.

How you see the world

When the pressure in your eye is very high, your vision might be blurry. Usually when the high eye pressure is lowered with drops, your vision goes back to normal. But if the eye pressure has been high for a long time, you might not see so well even with normal eye pressure.

How the world sees you

If the pressure inside your eyes was high when you were born, your eyes might be bigger than other people's. When the

pressure is very high, the clear window at the front of the eye (the cornea) can become cloudy and the white of the eye can become red.

What causes it?

The eye is filled with a liquid like water. The liquid keeps the eyeball in shape, and it keeps the inside of the eye healthy by bringing nutrients and removing waste. The liquid is constantly being replaced by fresh liquid and the old liquid is removed from the eye through drainage channels. In most children with glaucoma, these drainage channels don't work properly. As a result, the old liquid can't flow out, but new liquid is still coming in. This makes the pressure go up inside the eye. In most children, this is because the drainage channels haven't formed properly as a baby. In some children, the drainage channels get blocked by damage from another eye disease.

How can the doctor check for glaucoma?

The doctor can check the pressure inside your eye with different machines. One machine is used with a microscope that shows the eyes close up. Others look like a pen. Before checking the pressure, the doctor usually puts drops in your eyes, so you won't feel anything during the test.



Examining the eyes with a microscope

Getting it sorted

Most young children with glaucoma need an eye operation to bring the pressure down when the eye drops stop working. There are different types of operations. Some open up blocked drainage channels. Others make a new drainage channel.

If the pressure is still a little too high after the operation, you might need to use eye drops.

Once the pressure has been sorted, many children with glaucoma see better when wearing glasses.

More information online

International Glaucoma Association:
www.glaucoma-association.com

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Moorfields Direct telephone helpline

Phone: 020 7566 2345

Monday–Friday, 9am–9pm

Saturday, 9am–5pm


Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325

Email: pals@moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have



about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs.