

Make Sure Your Child's Eyes Are Healthy!



One in 20 preschool-aged children and one in four school-aged children has a vision problem. If not corrected, these problems may lead to permanent vision loss. Finding problems, and treating them early, is the best way to help your child develop their best vision.

Don't depend on your child to tell you they are not seeing well. Most children believe the way they see is the way everyone sees. They may not know that blurry or double vision is not normal, or that seeing through only one eye is a problem.

If you think your child has a vision problem, see an eye doctor right away!

Answer the questions below to see if your child has an increased chance of a vision problem.

Some children are at a higher risk for eye problems:

Was your child born prematurely (less than 32 completed weeks of pregnancy) or low birth weight? **YES NO**

Is there a family history (child's parents, siblings, grandparents) of eye problems (such as significant need for glasses, lazy eye, eye turn or crossed eyes, childhood cataract, or eye tumors)? **YES NO**

Has your child had an eye injury that required a visit to the doctor? **YES NO**

Has your child been diagnosed with a problem that affects his or her physical, mental and/or emotional development? **YES NO**

Does your child have any other serious health conditions? (Such as diabetes) **YES NO**

What do your child's eyes look like?

 Eyes don't line up – one appears crossed inward, looks outward or upward **YES NO**

 Eyelids are red-rimmed, crusted or swollen **YES NO**

 Eyes are watery or red (inflamed) **YES NO**

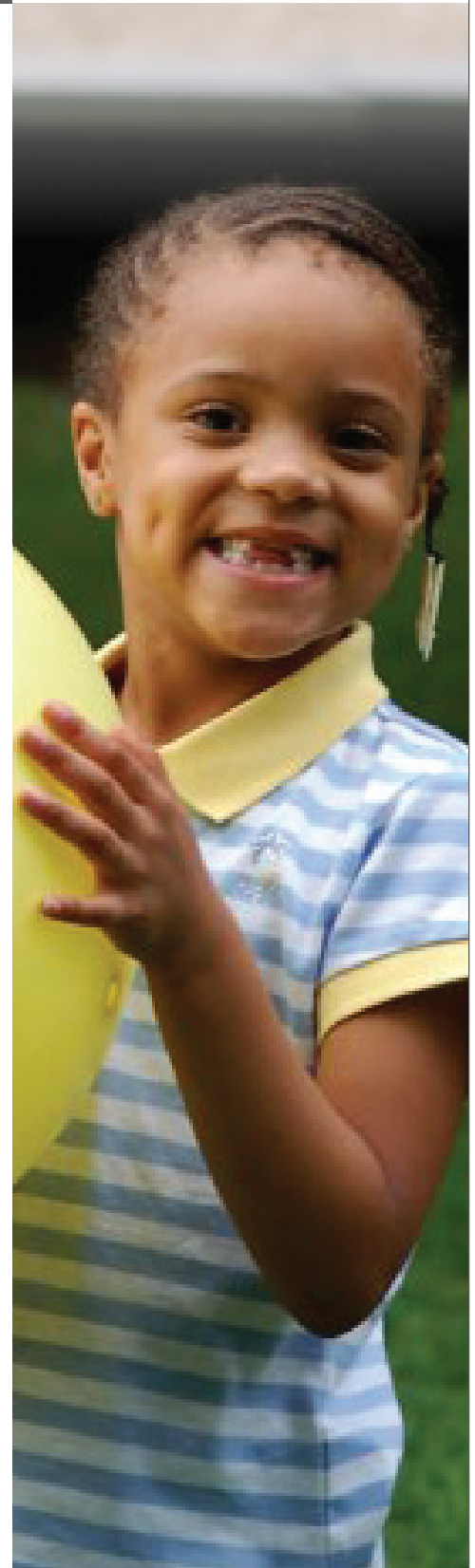
 Eyelid(s) do not open fully **YES NO**

How does your child act?

Rubs eyes a lot when doing close-up work **YES NO**

Closes or covers one eye when looking at something **YES NO**

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this fact sheet is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, it is provided for educational purposes only. You assume full responsibility for how you choose to use this information. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified healthcare provider before starting any new treatment or discontinuing an existing treatment. Talk with your child's healthcare provider about any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Nothing contained in these topics is intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment.

Make Sure Your Child's Eyes Are Healthy—Continued

Tilts head or thrusts forward when trying to read or see something far away.	YES	NO
Squints eyes or frowns when trying to see things near or far away	YES	NO
Blinks more than usual or seems cranky when doing close-up work	YES	NO
Bumps into things within his or her range of sight; does not seem to use sense of vision	YES	NO
Moves head while reading, uses finger to hold place or does not remember what they just read	YES	NO
Brings toys close to her face to see them or sits very close to television or computer monitor	YES	NO

What does your child say?

"My eyes are burning" or "I can't see very well"	YES	NO
After doing close-up work, your child says "I feel dizzy", "I have a headache" or "I feel sick/nauseous"	YES	NO
"Everything looks blurry", or "I see double"	YES	NO

If you answered YES to any of the above statements, call your eye doctor to discuss and/or make an appointment for your child.

Remember, your child may still have an eye problem even if he or she does not complain or has not shown any unusual signs. A combination of vision screening and complete eye examinations by an eye doctor is recommended throughout childhood to ensure that your child has the best possible vision. (An eye examination is generally only done by an eye doctor – ophthalmologist or optometrist; a vision screening is not meant to diagnose a vision problem, but it does provide insight into your child's potential vision health, and may be conducted by a pediatrician, school nurse, or community health worker).

Vision screening is an important part of all well child visits.

Did your pediatrician's office conduct a vision screening on your child during the last well child visit?	YES	NO
Did the pediatrician recommend that your child have a complete eye exam by an eye doctor?	YES	NO
Has your child ever had a complete eye exam by an eye doctor? If YES, how long ago? _____	YES	NO

Ask at every well child visit if your child's eyes have been screened. Talk to your child's doctor about any questions or concerns you have about your child's vision.

Prevent Blindness America recommends that:

- » Newborns have their eyes checked by pediatrician while still in the hospital nursery.
- » During regular well-baby exams, from birth to up to 3 years of age, doctors use history and a vision screening to see if a complete eye exam is needed.
- » Beginning at well-child exams at age 3, vision screening should be added to the doctor's vision evaluation.
- » If a child fails a vision screening or if there is any concern of an eye or vision problem, the child should be referred to an eye doctor for a complete eye exam.

Eye evaluations and vision screenings performed by your primary care doctor can help identify a potential vision problem in your child, but they do not substitute for an eye doctor's exam. Only an eye doctor can test the overall health of your child's eyes, for near and far vision, astigmatism, sharpness of vision, eye muscle control, color vision and how the eyes work together.