



## Amblyopia



## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please ask your orthoptist at your next appointment if you have any further questions to ask; they will be happy to help!

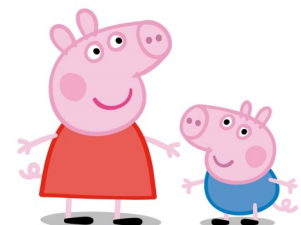
Hertfordshire Community   
NHS Trust

### CHILDREN'S EYE SERVICE

St Albans Children's Centre  
Church Crescent  
St Albans  
AL3 5JB

Marlowes Health and Wellbeing Centre  
39—41 The Marlowes  
Hemel Hempstead  
HP1 1LD

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# Amblyopia



## What is amblyopia?

A child's visual system develops and is "elastic" from birth until approximately eight years old. During this time, the brain is developing fine vision for each eye. Amblyopia is when one or both eyes have reduced sight due the vision not developing normally in the early years of life.

## What are the causes?

A difference in glasses prescription between the two eyes or a very high prescription in both eyes OR as squint that has a preference for one eye. Other causes can be droopy eyelid or cataract.

## How is it treated?

The first line of treatment is to check the glasses prescription and wear the glasses full time for at least 4 months before considering more treatment. If there is still a difference in the vision, the next step of treatment is to start patching. If left untreated past 8 years amblyopia may lead to a permanent reduction in sight for the weaker eye and it is much harder to treat.

## Patching treatment

A patch is placed over the "good eye" to strengthen the vision in the weaker eye. Patches can be fabric patches that go over the glasses or sticky patches that go over the eye—like a pirate!

The amount of time to patch the eye daily will vary for each child. We aim to prescribe a personalised patching regime for each individual child. There have been studies to show that near games and activities that require close visual attention and hand coordination are effective with patching.

## How long does patching last?

The situation of each child is different and therefore the duration of patching recommended is specific to each child and their condition. Typical durations range from several months up to years.



## Tips for patching:

- Explain patching to your child so they know why they are patching—to make their eye stronger!
- Ensure people (family, friends and teachers) are aware and supportive of patching!
- Set a routine for patching and make it fun to do! For example, always wearing the patch when playing on the tablet at home or when watching TV, or colouring.
- Give rewards for a successful day/ week of patching!
- Complete your patching record to keep track of progress.