

Signs of Eye Problems in Children



Children's eyes change very quickly, and eye problems may happen at any age. It's important to follow your child's healthcare provider's advice on vision screenings. Along with screenings, watch how your child acts and listen to what they say. Below are some signs that your child may have an eye problem. Talk with your child's provider if you see any of these signs.

Physical signs

Look for physical signs on or around your child's eyes. There may be a problem if your child has:

- One or both eyes that cross (look toward the center of the face)
- One or both eyes that turn in, out, up, or down
- Crusty, swollen, bloodshot, or red-rimmed eyes
- Eyes that water a lot
- Discharge, bleeding, or red bumps on the eyelids
- A pupil that looks white instead of red in a color photo
- A difference between the two eyes (for example, if one has a larger or smaller pupil)

Behaviors

Watch how your child acts. Some simple behaviors may be signs of an eye problem. These include:

- Closing one eye to look at something
- Turning or tilting the head to see
- Squinting to see
- Not seeing things you point out
- Holding objects close to the face to see them
- Sitting very close to the TV
- Blinking or rubbing one or both eyes a lot
- Running into objects
- Falling down at night or in places that are not well-lit

Comments

Listen to what your child says. Some comments can signal an eye problem. Children may have an eye problem if they say that:

- They can't see the board at school
- Things look blurry or funny

- Their eyes itch, burn, or feel scratchy
- They were hit in the eye
- They feel something in their eye
- They feel pain in or around one or both eyes
- Light makes their eyes hurt

Headaches and dyslexia

Head pain (headache) may or may not be caused by eye problems. And not recognizing letters and words (dyslexia) isn't often due to eye problems. If your child has headaches or dyslexia, an eye exam can be done to rule out eye or vision concerns.

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