



Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Duane's Syndrome

**Information for parents,
carers and patients**



**Orthoptic Department,
Oxford Eye Hospital**

This leaflet explains the condition of Duane's syndrome, how it affects eye movements and eye co-ordination, and whether any treatment is advisable.

What is Duane's syndrome?

This is an eye movement disorder which is congenital. This means that you are born with this condition. It can affect one eye or both eyes. It normally affects whether you can look from one side to the other (horizontal eye movement). The left eye is more commonly affected and Duane's syndrome is more common in females.

What causes Duane's syndrome?

There are a few different theories on what causes Duane's syndrome, but generally there is thought to be a 'mis-wiring' of two different nerves. Each of these nerves usually work the eye muscles that control horizontal eye movement. The eye muscles may be quite normal, but because they are not receiving the correct messages from the nerves, they cannot move the eye fully in a certain direction.

Does Duane's syndrome affect vision?

Usually not, unless you also have a squint or already need glasses.

If you have Duane's syndrome you might find that you change the way you hold your head to help you to see to the side. You might turn your face to one side to make up for your limited eye movement. This also helps you to see with binocular vision (the ability to use both eyes together and achieve 3D vision).

What is the treatment?

Children with Duane's syndrome will need to have regular orthoptic reviews until around 7 years old. This is to make sure their vision remains good in each eye and they can still use their eyes together without a problem. However, they will not 'grow out' of this condition.

Generally, there is no treatment for Duane's syndrome. This is because related symptoms are uncommon and the majority of people with Duane's syndrome are comfortable and can make up for their lack of eye movement with a slight change to how they hold their head. If you also have a squint or need glasses we will discuss with you whether you need any further treatment for the Duane's syndrome.

If you find you are having to make a big change to the way you hold your head to help you see and this is causing you problems, or if you also have a squint which you are concerned about, then we might recommend a treatment. We can use small attachments to a pair of glasses called 'Fresnel prisms' or, in some cases, we might offer you an operation.

Is there any other help?

Information for parents:

If your child is changing their head posture to help them to see more clearly, please allow them to do this and do not try to correct it or encourage them to hold their head straight.

The teachers at school should be advised if your child finds it difficult to look to one side due to Duane's syndrome. The teacher might want to think about where the best place would be for your child to sit in class to help them with this. It would be better for your child to sit in the centre of the classroom or in a position that helps them to direct their eyes to their more 'normal' side.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or need more information, please speak to the Orthoptist or Ophthalmologist at your next clinic visit or contact the Orthoptic Department.

Tel: **01865 234 567**

and listen for the option for the Orthoptic Department
(8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.)

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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charity@ouh.nhs.uk | 01865 743 444 | hospitalcharity.co.uk

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Author: Claire MacIntosh, Orthoptist
Head of Orthoptics: Jacqui Greenhalgh
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