

Changing your appointment

If you want to change or cancel your appointment at any hospital please call **020 7443 9757**.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, please ask a member of staff.

How to contact us:

Barnet Hospital
020 8216 4958

Edgware Community Hospital
020 8732 6223

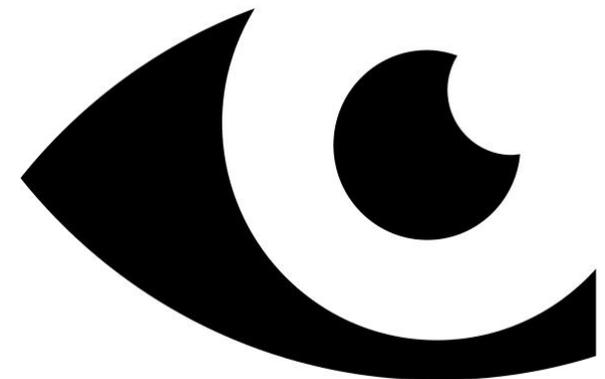
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Adult Strabismus (Squint) Surgery

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Ophthalmology
department



This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions you may have about squint surgery.

What is the aim of Surgery?

1. To improve the alignment of your eyes, to make the squint smaller in size and/or
2. In some patient to reduce or try to eliminate double vision.

How is the surgery done?

Squint surgery is a very common eye operation. It usually involves weakening or strengthening certain eye muscle(s) by moving the position of the eye muscle to give the desired effect. The squint operation is usually performed on the squinting eye. In some cases the operation has to be carried out on both eyes and on occasions on the normal eye, usually if this isn't a patient's first squint operation. These muscles are attached to the front of the eye under the conjunctiva, (the clear surface layer).

The eye is never taken out of the socket during surgery. Stitches are

used to attach the muscles in their new positions.

Squint surgery is nearly always a day case procedure.

Squint surgery is usually carried out under general anaesthetic and generally takes up to 60 minutes depending on the number of muscles that need surgery. When you have recovered from the anaesthetic and the nurses are happy for you to be discharged, you are free to go home, usually a few hours later.

What will happen on the day?

When you arrive to the Mann Unit the *nurse* will talk you through the process and take care of you throughout your day care stay. The *Orthoptist* will take some measurements and also request you complete a short questionnaire. The Consultant *Ophthalmologist* will go through the procedure with you and take your consent.

What are the risks of the operation?

Squint surgery is generally a safe procedure. However, as with any operation, complications can and do occur. Generally, these are relatively minor but on rare occasions they may be serious.

Common complications can be:

- **Under and overcorrection**

As the results of squint surgery are not completely predictable, your original squint may still be present (under correction) or the squint direction may change (overcorrection). Occasionally a different type of squint may occur. These problems may require another operation.

- **Double vision**

You may experience double vision after surgery, as your brain adjusts to the new position of your eyes. This is common and often settles in a few days or weeks but may take months to improve. Occasionally, further surgery is required for persistent double vision.

- **Redness**

The redness in the eye can take as long as three months to go away. The eye may not completely return to its normal colour, particularly with repeated operation, but this is rare.

- **Scarring**

Most of the scarring of the conjunctiva (the skin of the eye) is not noticeable by three months after your surgery, but occasionally visible scars will remain, especially with repeat operations.

- **Infection**

Infection is a risk with any operation and, although rare, can result in loss of the eye or vision. Using your eye drops post-operatively will minimize this risk.

- **Suture reaction**

Localised allergic reaction to the suture can occur. This can be remedied with minor surgery.

The British Ophthalmic Surveillance Unit (BOSU) recently conducted a

study into **severe** complications of strabismus surgery in the UK.

These occur in 3 patients per 1000 (0.3 %) overall.

These figures include:

- **Globe perforation**

1 patient in 1000(0.1%)

- **Muscle slippage**

1 patient in 1100(0.09%)

- **Loss of Vision**

1 patient in 2000 (0.05%)

Post-surgery care

- Your eye(s) will be swollen, red and sore and your vision may be blurry
- Use painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen if your eyes are painful. The pain usually wears off within a few days.
- Use your eye drops which should be used for a period of 2-4 weeks.
- It is important that you attend your post-operative (follow-up) clinic appointment
- Don't rub your eye(s) as this may loosen the stitches

- Continue using glasses if you have them
 - Use cooled boiled water and a clean tissue or gauze to clean any stickiness of your eyes and avoid water entering your eyes from the bath or shower for the first week
 - Don't swim for four weeks
 - Don't drive for 48 hours.
 - Avoid dusty, sandy atmospheres for 2 weeks after surgery.
 - Avoid wearing contact lens in the operated eye until it is red and you are advised it is safe by your doctor or orthoptist.
- It usually takes a few weeks before the final outcome of the operation can be determined with certainty.

Concerns

If you have any concerns in the first week after surgery, do not hesitate to call the hospital on 020 7794 0500 and ask to speak to the ophthalmologist on call or the Orthoptist.