

# Pseudo Strabismus / Epicanthus

## Information for patients

### What is pseudo strabismus?

A pseudo strabismus or pseudo squint is the false appearance of an eye deviation or 'squint'. It looks as if one or both eyes turn in, out, up or down; but in fact the eyes are straight. This false impression of a squint is often most noticeable in photographs and when the child turns their head slightly or looks at an angle:



Pseudo ('false') strabismus: note the light reflections (white dots) are central in each eye.



True strabismus (squint): note the light reflection (white dot) is central in the child's right eye, but on the edge of the coloured part of the left eye. **This shows a true left convergent squint (left eye turning in).**

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## What causes a pseudo strabismus?

The most common causes are **epicanthus** (prominent folds of skin over the inside corner of the eye), and/or a flat bridge of the nose. Other causes include a large or narrow distance between the eyes, and different coloured eyes (heterochromia)

## It is common?

Yes. Many babies have pseudo strabismus.

## What is the treatment?

No treatment is required. As your child grows, the bridge of the nose will develop, and the pseudo strabismus (false appearance of a squint) will become less noticeable.

## Assessment of your child

The Orthoptist will check your child's vision in each eye and test to ensure that your child doesn't have true strabismus (squint). Your child will be monitored until we are able to test their vision using pictures or letters in a row. Your child may then be ready for discharge to a local Optician for continued care.

## Testing for glasses

Your child will be tested to see if they need glasses, at approximately two years of age, by an Optometrist (hospital Optician).

## Benefits of assessment

The assessment usually gives reassurance that your child doesn't have a true squint and that their vision is good. However, if your child *is* found to have a squint it is helpful to find out early, in order to receive advice on the best course of management and any treatment required.

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## **Risks of not having assessment for pseudo strabismus**

A true squint can occur in children at different ages and can cause significant vision defects if left untreated. It is important to attend all hospital appointments if your child has been diagnosed with pseudo strabismus as a baby, as they may still develop a true squint at a later stage / when they are older.

## **Future vision assessment**

Children in Medway and Swale primary schools are funded for a vision screening check by an Orthoptist in their reception year at age four to five years old.

There is no funded vision screening in Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells primary schools, so your child may be offered a further hospital appointment instead.

Older children able to attend the local Optician are entitled to free eye examinations by an Optometrist until the age of 16 years.

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## Contact details

**Maidstone Orthoptic Clinic** ☎ 01622 226236

**Medway Orthoptic Clinic** ☎ 01634 830000  
ext 5792

**Tunbridge Wells Orthoptic Clinic** ☎ 01892 633890

For non appointment enquiries only you can email:

[mtw-tr.PemburyOrthoptics@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.PemburyOrthoptics@nhs.net)

**Sittingbourne Orthoptic Clinic** ☎ 01795 418300  
ext 2015

**NHS 111** ☎ 111

**NHS Choices online** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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**Telephone:** ☎ 01622 224960 or ☎ 01892 632953

**Email:** [mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net)

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