



Pediatric Low Vision

What is Low Vision?

Partial vision loss that cannot be corrected causes a vision impairment known as low vision. A person with low vision has decreased vision (usually defined as 20/70 or less), a decreased field of vision (peripheral vision), or both. People with low vision are not blind and usually retain some useful vision. Low vision care is about rehabilitation. It is not a cure. It's about finding new ways to accomplish the tasks of daily life. For a child, this is about helping them in school and play.

What are the signs of Low Vision?

Some signs of low vision include difficulty recognizing a familiar face, difficulty reading, difficulty seeing objects that are potential hazards such as steps, curbs, and walls. Printed material can appear broken or distorted.

What are some of the causes of Low Vision in children?

Low vision can be the result of childhood conditions such as [albinism](#), [pediatric cataracts](#), [pediatric glaucoma](#), [nystagmus](#), and retinal and optic nerve abnormalities.

What is a Low Vision exam?

The pediatric low vision exam will vary depending on the age of the child. The pediatric ophthalmologist will try to gain as much knowledge as possible about your child's visual functioning. This will include visual acuity (a measure of how small an object your child can see), refractive error (the type of eyeglass prescription that may improve your child's vision), visual field (the extent of peripheral or side vision), eye muscle function (the alignment of the eyes and ability to move them in all directions), and color vision. Additional testing may be recommended including an electroretinogram (ERG) and visual evoked potential (VEP). These studies typically will be done in a hospital or clinic setting and may require some sedation. A low vision assessment should also be done by qualified personnel.

What type of treatment is available for patients with Low Vision?

Glasses and/or contact lenses may be recommended. Magnifiers, binoculars, telescopes or tinted lenses may be helpful as well. There are many non-optical devices such as closed-circuit TV's, large print books and adaptive technology is also available. Children below the age of three years will be referred to Early Intervention. School-aged children should receive services from a teacher of the visually impaired.

What is Early Intervention?



Early Intervention comprises a team of special education professionals. The early intervention team works with parents and caregivers to develop a family centered program to enable a young child to develop all his/her abilities and potential. A teacher trained in working with the visually impaired should be involved. Your child may also need physical, occupational and speech therapy.

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