

What are the early signs of glaucoma in infants and children?

Enlargement of one or both eyes (this may be subtle and can be mistaken for normal), excessive tearing, cloudy corneas, sensitivity to light in one or both eyes, myopia (nearsightedness) in one or both eyes.

How is pediatric glaucoma treated?

Pediatric glaucoma is treated differently than adult glaucoma, most patients require surgery. Approximately 80-90% of babies who receive prompt surgical treatment will do well, and may have normal or nearly normal vision for their lifetime. Most babies who have glaucoma and do not obtain appropriate care quickly will lose their vision. Early detection and treatment can mean the difference between sight and blindness.

What is retinoblastoma?

Retinoblastoma (RB) is a rare form of cancer affecting the light-sensitive retinal cells that enable sight. Although the disease is very rare, it is the most common ocular malignancy in children and the third most common cancer to affect children --- occurring in one out of every 15,000 births. In the United States, 250 to 350 new cases are diagnosed each year --- 90% of which occur in children under five years of age.

The treatment of RB depends on the size and location of the tumor and whether one or both eyes are involved. With earlier detection and improved treatments, the prognosis for vision and life for RB patients has improved significantly in the past twenty years. However, because the disease is so rare, many pediatricians and primary care providers may not recognize the early signs, and parents rarely notice the subtle changes that may identify a tumor in their child's eyes. Left untreated, RB tumor nodules grow rapidly, expanding to fill the eye and extending along the optic nerve to the brain.

Your Eye Care is Our Number One Concern

At TLC Eyecare and Laser Centers, we are committed to providing premier eye care service. Our state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment allows early diagnosis of common eye problems such as cataract, glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy, often before symptoms occur. Our board-certified ophthalmologists and optometrists use the newest technologies and treatments available in the United States today, allowing us to treat eye ailments safely and effectively.

Offering State-of-the-Art Eye Care to Our Patients

Vision is one of the most important of the five senses, and healthy eyes are necessary for good vision. Eye problems can occur at any age, but the chance for developing them increases as we age. Vision problems can affect a person's overall health, causing disability, stress, and a decreased quality of life.

Early detection of eye problems is vital for maintaining healthy eyes. Diagnosing an eye disease in its early stages minimizes its damage and greatly affects the success of treatment. Because many eye ailments have no symptoms until their advanced stages, regular and thorough eye exams with our Affiliate Network of optometrists are necessary throughout your lifetime to help maintain healthy eyes.

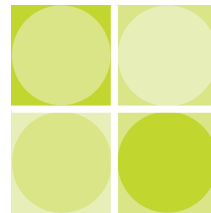
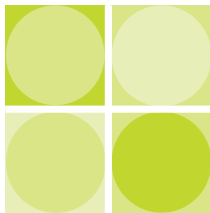
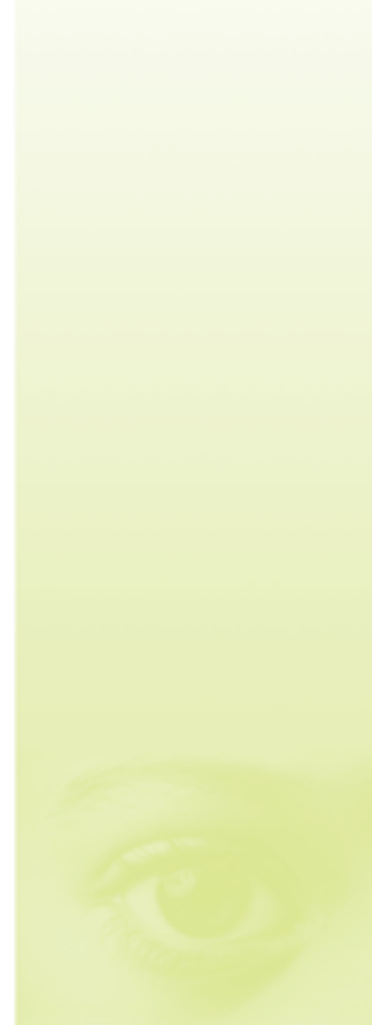
We Make it Easy for You To Maintain Healthy Eyes

With several vision centers located throughout Michigan and Ohio, our patients enjoy easy access to quality eye care whenever and wherever they need it. Because TLC Eyecare and Laser Centers have doctors on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, our patients have immediate access to treatment for unforeseen eye injuries and accidents.



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Amblyopia Strabismus Pediatric Glaucoma Retinoblastoma

A child's visual system develops as the brain matures, a process that takes about ten years. Infants' eyes are optically capable of seeing, infant vision is limited to around 20/1500, partly because the brain has not learned how to process the visual images it receives. As visual development proceeds, that same child will eventually be able to detect the finest details in an image.

The doctors with TLC Eyecare and Laser Centers use leading clinical technologies and equipment when diagnosing and treating your child's eye problems. Our comprehensive eye exams are designed to detect these eye problems and other diseases in their early stages. Early detection allows our doctors a greater chance to maintain vision and treat the disease before it has inflicted irreparable harm on the eye.

Why do children wear glasses?

A child may need glasses to simply see better. Glasses may also be prescribed as treatment for strabismus (ocular misalignment), for unusual refractive error in one or both eyes, and also for protection. Protective glasses are most commonly recommended when one eye has permanently reduced vision. Amblyopia treatment may include glasses as well as patching.

The pediatric eye exam includes dilation of the pupils with eye drops for examination of the interior of the eye. The drops also weaken the focusing power of the eye so that an instrument called a retinoscope may be used to measure the refractive error. This type of exam is required in infants and preverbal children.

Tear duct (Lacrimal obstructions in infants)

The most common cause of constant tearing in infants is an obstruction of the drainage system for the tears. Tears drain from the inner corner of each eye. There are openings on the upper and lower eyelids that direct the tears into a canal that opens into the nose. Have you

noticed how your nose runs when you cry? Generally the obstruction opens by age 6 to 12 months and the problem resolves. The initial treatment is massage over the inner corner of the eye on the lids and antibiotic eyedrops as needed.

If the obstruction persists, a procedure called a probing may be recommended. Other procedures may be recommended for persistent obstructions.

What is Pediatric Strabismus?

Strabismus is ocular misalignment and affects approximately 4% of the population. It may be present since infancy or develop later. Even adults can develop strabismus. When misalignment occurs early in life, the child may not describe double vision or any problem, but parents may notice an eye that is not coordinated with the other eye. It may be constant or it may come and go. Examination is important to exclude any neurologic problem or a problem affecting the health of the eye, such as cataract or retinoblastoma. Treatment may include patching for eye muscle control, glasses, exercises or surgery. Amblyopia may develop in the deviated eye so that vision is reduced.

The most common types of strabismus are esotropia (the eyes turn in) and exotropia (the eyes turn out). A complete eye exam is done to determine the nature of the problem and to recommend treatment. Our goal is to be sure that each child develops good vision and has straight eyes.

VISION THREATENING EYE PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN

What is amblyopia or "lazy eye"?

Common to about one in 25 to 50 people, amblyopia is a condition in which the visual function of one eye is underdeveloped, while vision for the other eye is normal, although, at times, it can affect both eyes. Amblyopia is most likely to be successfully corrected if detected and treated during infancy or early childhood.

What causes amblyopia?

Any factor that prevents clear vision during infancy or childhood promotes amblyopia. The main causes are:

- Strabismus (misaligned eyes).
- Unequal focus (an asymmetrical refractive error).
- Cloudiness in normally clear eye tissues such as corneal opacities and cataracts, which prevent the proper focus of light in the eye.
- Occlusion (a droopy eyelid).

What is the treatment for amblyopia?

Once amblyopia is detected, the brain must be encouraged to process visual information from the affected eye. This is frequently accomplished by applying a patch over the child's good eye. Eye drops are also sometimes used to treat amblyopia.

Left untreated, visual acuity in an amblyopic eye may be permanently reduced and a lifetime of poor and uncorrectable vision could result. This can become an ever more significant and disabling problem if the remaining healthy eye ever becomes diseased or injured. Unfortunately, once a child has reached roughly eight years of age, treatment rarely is successful.

What is pediatric glaucoma?

Although it most commonly affects the elderly, primary infantile glaucoma occurs in about 1 in 25,000 babies born in the United States. Glaucoma may also develop in babies and children who have other types of eye disease. In both adults and children with glaucoma, the prevention of permanent blindness requires detection and proper treatment. Glaucoma may go undetected during childhood and the disorder can be masked as other conditions.

