

What is an Orthoptist?

Orthoptists are allied health professionals able to assess, diagnose and treat a variety of vision disorders. They assess patients of all ages from babies to the very elderly.

Orthoptists are recognised as the experts in childhood vision screening, and undertake primary screening of children.

Children and adults with special needs have a higher incidence of visual defects and the caring and skilled approach of the orthoptist is vital with these patients.

What will happen at the appointment?

The orthoptist, will carry out a detailed examination of the patient and then select the appropriate diagnostic techniques.

These include tests to assess the position of the eye, the ocular motility and the state of binocular function (use of the two eyes together).

The interpretation of the results allows the orthoptist to judge the patient's ability to interpret visual information and to maintain eye control with the two eyes working in unison.

Orthoptic care for babies

Babies are more likely to have vision and eye coordination problems.

Orthoptists evaluate if their vision is at the level expected for their age and also screen for signs of eye control weakness such as small angle strabismus that may be difficult for parents to detect, and which may have a significant effect on the development and function of the visual system.

Orthoptic care for children

Investigation, diagnose, monitor and management of visual disorders related to eye development such as

- lazy eye (amblyopia).
- wobbly eyes (nystagmus).
- eye misalignment (strabismus).
- double vision (diplopia).
- ocular head postures assessment.

Orthoptic care for adults

Investigation, diagnose, monitor and management of eye symptoms related to eye misalignment (strabismus) and near focusing problems, such as problems with using the eyes together and double vision (diplopia).

Assessment and rehabilitation plans for visual impairment related with Glaucoma, Diabetic Retinopathy, Retinitis Pigmentosa, Stroke eye-related symptoms, Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson's disease.

Note

It is important to remember that, while testing and screening for visual problems, the orthoptist can also identify and reassure those patients whose vision is good.