

EYE HEALTHCARE

LONGSIGHTEDNESS IN CHILDREN

Longsightedness (hyperopia) which affects about 25-30% of the population occurs when either the eye ball is too short or the curve on the front of the eye (cornea) is too flat, preventing the light from forming a focus on the back of the eye (retina). The condition generally occurs from a failure of one eye to grow properly in the early formative years and is strongly related to family history.

The classic signs that your child maybe longsighted include frontal and temporal headaches (around the eyes) and sometimes periodic blurring, particularly with concentration e.g. homework, computer, play station etc. The child's concentration levels may not seem as long as normal, complaining that their eyes are 'tired and sore'.

Children with **moderate** levels of hyperopia often go undetected as they have excellent distance and near vision. They can use the eyes own

built in focusing mechanism (the lens) to increase the focal power of the eye (accommodate) and therefore bring the light into focus on the retina. This often induces the achy strain for up-close concentration tasks and therefore warrants spectacles on a temporary basis.

The children with the **high** degrees of longsightedness however run the risk of one of the eyes turning inwards (convergent squint) and subsequently developing a lazy eye (Amblyopia). These children need to wear spectacles all the time and have regular checks/updates by their Optician.

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