Amblyopia Encyclopedia Article

Amblyopia

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Amblyopia

A common eye problem in which one eye does not develop normal vision.

Amblyopia is also known as lazy **eye.** It occurs when one eye sees better than the other because of injury or because of an underlying eye problem. The child learns to depend on the "good" eye, and sight in the weaker eye atrophies. Amblyopia is children is most commonly a side-effect of **strabismus**—crossed or misaligned eyes. **Cataracts** and astigmatism can also lead to amblyopia. In amblyopia there is nothing organically wrong with the weaker eye. But the **brain** learns to suppress vision in the weaker eye, and if this continues, the eye may lose sight altogether. If amblyopia is diagnosed and treated by the age of three, it is generally quite curable. Treatment usually consists of patching the stronger eye, forcing the child to use the less developed eye so the weaker eye can "catch up." Treatment may last anywhere from weeks to years.

For Further Study

Books

Collins, James F. *Your Eyes: An Owner's Guide.* Englewood liffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1995.

Savage, Stephen. *Eyes.* New York: Thomson Learning, 1995. Showers, Paul. *Look at Your Eyes.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.

Zinn, Walter J., and Herbert Solomon. *Complete Guide to Eyecare, Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses.* Hollywood, FL: Lifetime Books, 1995.

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