

Amblyopia

What is amblyopia?

Amblyopia is the scientific term for “lazy” eye. Amblyopia typically happens at birth, where one eye is just created much weaker than the fellow eye. We see with our brains, and our eyes are just a window for the brain to see. If one eye is much weaker than the fellow eye, our brains can still see and thus the brain begins to turn off the weaker, unused eye. Overtime, the weak eye can become more permanently weak if not treated with glasses, vision exercises, patching, or surgery.

The weaker eye that is not seeing clearly will move to its relaxed position. In some cases, the amblyopic eye will move inward towards to the nose and in other cases, the eye will move outwardly towards the ear. An eye turned inwardly or outwardly is termed strabismus. However, in some cases, the eye will still rest in its relaxed position straight ahead, aligned with the other eye. This is why it’s important for children to have an eye exam at an early age because amblyopia can be present without outward signs, such as strabismus. For children up to 6 months of age, intermittent strabismus is a normal part of development.

Today, Dr. Chapman has recommended patching.

Patch the better-seeing eye (right / left) for ____ hours/day, ____ days/week for ____ months while wearing glasses and performing engaging near-activities (games on tablets, homework, reading, coloring, drawing).

This can help strengthen the weaker eye and help restore better vision in the amblyopic eye.