



## Children and Young People's Services

### Eye Conditions Explained

On receiving the news that your baby/child/young person, is vision impaired you will probably be given the name of the eye condition.

At first, assimilating this information is not easy and you may not remember much of what has been said.

Parents usually need to seek out more details via the Internet, so it is vital that accurate and quality information is accessed.

We have listed a number of eye conditions with a brief overview and you will also find a link to an excellent website.

For further information on these and other conditions please contact our Family Support Service which has many years' experience in providing support in this area.

### Eye Conditions

**Albinism** – is a genetic condition in which the colouration (pigmentation) in the body is reduced, in either the skin and eyes or the eyes alone. This causes light hair and pale skin. The child/young person's eyes and brain are 'wired' incorrectly and swap more information at the optic nerve than normal and parts of the eye may not be developed properly. For further information, please visit -

[www.albinism.org.uk](http://www.albinism.org.uk)

**Aniridia** – is a result of the iris (the coloured part of the eye), not growing when a baby is in the womb. Aniridia can affect vision in different ways depending on the level to which the iris is affected, but vision will usually not be as clear as normal due to too much light getting into the eyes. Glare and photophobia (an aversion to bright lights) may be problematic. For further information, please visit –

<http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>



**Cataract (congenital)** – is when a normal, clear lens in the eye becomes cloudy. If the lens is not clear, then not all the light can get into the eye and vision is often blurred. In most cases, a child/young person with cataracts will have an aversion to bright lights. For further information, please visit – <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>

**Coloboma** – is a result of the eye not growing fully when a baby is in the womb and can affect any part of the eye. Defects can be very large or barely noticeable and larger defects or those affecting the back of the eye are more likely to affect vision. For further information, please visit - <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions/>  
Microphthalmia Anophthalmia and Coloboma Society (MACs):  
Email: [enquiries@macs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@macs.org.uk) <http://www.macs.org.uk/contact.html>

**Glaucoma (congenital)** – is a range of conditions where pressure inside the eye is too high due to a blockage in the gap between the iris (coloured part of the eye) and the cornea (clear curved window at the front of the eye), consequently, fluid is unable to drain away. The build-up of pressure in the eye may cause damage to the optic nerve. In most cases, a child/young person with Glaucoma will have an aversion to bright lights. For further information, please visit – <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>

**Leber's Amaurosis** – is an inherited retinal dystrophy in which the incorrect development of rod and cone photoreceptors occurs in the womb. The rods enable us to see things that move, see in the dark and produce images in black and white. The cones are good at seeing things that are still, in bright light, fine detail and in colour. For further information, please visit - <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>

**Nystagmus** – is a quick, involuntary 'to and fro' movement of the eyes which causes blurred vision due to continuous shaking. These movements are usually side-to-side but can also occur up and down. For further information, please visit - <http://nystagmusnetwork.org>

**Optic Atrophy** – is the damage to the retina or the optic nerve, causing the wires joining the eyes and brain to wear out. This damage can affect visual acuity (sharpness of vision), field of vision and contrast sensitivity (ability to distinguish colours and shades from each other). For further information, please visit - <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>



**Optic Nerve Hypoplasia** – is a congenital condition where the optic nerves, in either one or both eyes, do not grow to their correct size in the womb. The condition is non-progressive and visual loss will depend on the severity of the condition. For further information please visit - <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>

**Retinitis Pigmentosa** – is a group of genetic eye conditions which affect the rod and cone photoreceptors at the back of the eye. The rods enable us to see things that move, see in the dark and produce images in black and white. The cones are good at seeing things that are still, in bright light, fine detail and in colour. Retinitis pigmentosa can affect vision in different ways, depending on whether the problem is with either the rod or cone receptors, or both. For further information, please visit - [www.brps.org.uk](http://www.brps.org.uk)

**Retinoblastoma** – is a rare tumour of the retina which causes damage in and around the eye. It can be present at birth or can develop in the first few years of a child/young person's life. For further information, please visit – [www.chect.org.uk](http://www.chect.org.uk)

**Retinopathy of prematurity** – occurs in some premature and low birth weight babies when the retina has not developed properly. It can lead to scarring and detachment of the retina, causing vision impairment. For further information, please visit <http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/conditions>

**Septo-Optic Dysplasia** – is associated with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia and is a combination of both the brain and optic nerve not growing correctly. For further information, please visit – <http://www.gosh.nhs.uk/medical-information-0/search-medical-conditions/septo-optic-dysplasia>

**Strabismus (squint)** - this is a very common condition in childhood. The treatment may include prescribing glasses for a child/young person or encouraging them to wear an eye patch. For further information, please visit – <http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/condition/squint-strabismus>

For further support contact:  
Tel: 0800 781 1444  
Email: [cypservices@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:cypservices@guidedogs.org.uk)