



PATIENT NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2023

See

Celebrating
a World
of Vision



Vision Problems in Babies: Take Action Now!

Vision plays a critical role in how infants and young children learn and develop. The American Public Health Organization estimates that about 20% of preschoolers in the United States have vision problems. However, when babies are born, they don't have all their visual abilities yet. They must learn to focus their eyes and move them accurately over time. Early detection of eye issues can prevent these problems from becoming more severe and increases the likelihood of finding a successful treatment.

Recognize the Signs

Eye and vision problems tend to be rare for infants. For most babies, visual abilities gradually develop and usually without any complications. However, the following signs indicate there may be problems with the eyes in infants:

- Red, crusty eyes
- Excessive tearing
- Extreme light sensitivity
- Eye turning to one side constantly
- White spot in pupil or white pupil

Parents and caregivers should look for visual problems, such as crossed eyes or strabismus, in infants. It's vital to spot these problems early and consult with a doctor for diagnosis and treatment.

Many Vision Problems Are Treatable

The underlying cause of vision problems will dictate treatment, which may include using eye drops, wearing eyeglasses, Botox injections, or surgery. Other specialists can also work with children who have severe vision loss, including:

- Orthoptists
- Orientation and mobility specialists
- Occupational therapists
- Counselors
- Special education teachers

Parents and caregivers can also try age-appropriate activities at home to support their baby and their vision. Talk to your doctor to see what steps you can take to further support your child.

Prevention Efforts

Beyond the steps outlined above, parents and caregivers should take their children to screenings and comprehensive eye testing. After a baby is born, a pediatrician will inspect the newborn's eyes, pupils, and red reflexes during the infant's first vision screening. After the initial screening, parents and caregivers are recommended to take their child for a vision assessment during the first 12 months of a baby's life. Infants will be referred for further testing if any other signs of vision problems are discovered by parents, caregivers, or pediatricians.

The optometrist plays a vital role in the well-being of the baby. They will check the overall eye health and look for common problems, such as refractive errors (i.e., nearsightedness or farsightedness), eye movement and alignment, cataracts, and astigmatism, among others.

A Positive Outlook

All babies go through a series of screenings and tests to detect vision problems early. While treatment results may vary, early detection and intervention can resolve most eye conditions in babies. Infants should undergo screenings several times within the first year of life, starting with the newborn exam. These tests can help rule out any current eye conditions or abnormalities. If any vision problems are detected early, doctors may be able to correct it and avoid future issues.



Filth on Facial Tools: Just How Dirty Are They?



Many beauty products are applied in areas that are located close to the eyes, but research is lacking on the cleanliness of facial tools. In a recent study, researchers set out to determine how dirty facial tools get by swabbing 5 commonly used beauty products that are applied on or near the eyes. The investigators also examined germs and bacteria found on these tools.

According to the results, eyelash curlers were the eye makeup tools with the most germs. In addition, sleeping masks had 4 times more bacteria than a bathroom faucet handle. Furthermore, 56% of makeup users shared their tools with others. Only 10% of study participants reported ever cleaning their facial tools, and 20% reported never replacing them.

The study authors recommended never sharing beauty tools with someone else. Bacteria from dirty facial tools can result in poor eye health that may affect your vision. To help prevent infections, be especially diligent about the tools you use on or near your eyes. Cleaning makeup brushes often is also important because bristles can trap loads of bacteria that may be harmful to the eyes.



Q: What animal has the largest eye?

See answer on next page

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*Based on in vitro measurements of unworn lenses.

**Based on in vitro studies on unworn lenses.

†Based on lens movement, centration, and rotation at initial fitting.

References: 1. In a clinical trial to evaluate on-eye performance of TOTAL30® for Astigmatism lenses where n=69; Alcon data on file, 2021. 2. Based on a clinical trial where n=18; Alcon data on file, 2021. 3. In vitro analysis of lens oxygen permeability, water content, and surface imaging; Alcon data on file, 2021. 4. In vitro analysis of leflicon A contact lenses outermost surface softness and correlation with water content; Alcon data on file, 2021. 5. In vitro evaluation of bacterial adherence in commercial lenses; Alcon data on file, 2020. 6. In vitro evaluation of bacterial biofilm in commercial lenses; Alcon data on file, 2020. 7. Ishihara K, Fukazawa K, Sharma V, Liang S, et al. Antifouling silicone hydrogel contact lenses with a bioinspired 2-methacryloyloxyethyl phosphorylcholine polymer surface. *ACS Omega*. 2021;6:7058-7067. 8. In vitro evaluation of lipid deposition for leflicon A and commercial lenses using 3D confocal imaging; Alcon data on file, 2021.

See product instructions for complete wear, care, and safety information. 

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EYE-DROPS

The cornea of a shark is nearly identical to that of a human, and it has even been used in human eye surgery!



INSIGHTS

Staying Safe in the Kitchen With Visual Impairment



The kitchen is one of the most dangerous rooms in the house because many of its appliances can cause fires or injuries. Fortunately, there are simple steps you can take to make cooking in the kitchen more manageable for people who are visually impaired.

Below are a few examples of ways to protect yourself in the kitchen:

- **Keep the kitchen organized:** Knowing where everything is located and labeling it properly can help you cook more safely
- **Use color-contrasting tools:** Using tools that contrast the foods you're preparing may help you see things a little easier
- **Add light to the kitchen:** If you struggle in low light, consider adding light to your kitchen with lamps, LED light strips, or adhesive lights under cabinets
- **Prepare carefully:** Use a serving tray to prepare food and contain messes. Gather all ingredients before you start
- **Dress to avoid fires:** Wear short sleeves or roll your sleeves up. Keep oven mitts and potholders handy
- **Use other kitchen tools:** A timer can help prevent burning food. A meat thermometer can ensure foods are cooked to a safe temperature.



EYE-Q

Answer to Eye-Q (from page 1):
The giant squid, who has an eyeball the size of a soccer ball!

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