Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

# Myopia in Childhood

Version number: **1**
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# Myopia in Childhood

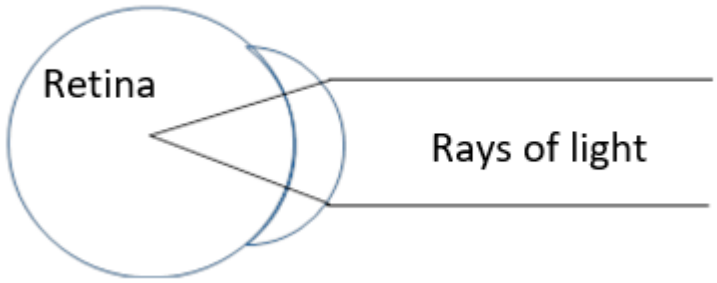
## Patient Information

## Orthoptics

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## What is Myopia (short sightedness)?

Myopia, or short sightedness, occurs when the eye is too large, or overpowered. This causes the light to be focused in front of the retina (back of the eye). This means that vision is clear for objects close to the eye, but blurred when looking into the distance.




## How is myopia treated in childhood?

Glasses are usually used to bring the image at the back of the eye into focus, but this can also be done using contact lenses

## What causes myopia in childhood?

Myopia can happen in any child, but several factors can make a child more likely to develop myopia. These factors include:

- family history

- ethnic background (especially East Asian or South Asian)
- environment (spending a lot of time indoors)
- spending a lot of time reading or doing work up close

## Why does myopia get worse?

It is most likely that the myopia will increase as your child grows, as the eye will also grow. This is often called myopia progression.

## What is wrong with myopia progression?

The higher your child’s prescription, the greater the risk there is of certain eye conditions when they are older. These conditions include glaucoma, cataracts, retinal detachment, and retinal degeneration.

## What can I do now to reduce myopia progression?

Ensure your child:

- wears their up-to-date spectacles and has regular sight tests
- spends at least 90 minutes a day outside during daylight hours
- uses good natural lighting when reading or doing close work
- limits their time looking at screens
- limits their time spent doing reading or close work once schoolwork is complete

## What else can be done to slow down myopia progression?

There is still research looking into the effectiveness of different treatments to slow down myopia progression.

These treatments include:

- multifocal soft contact lenses
- rigid contact lenses worn overnight (orthokeratology)
- specialist spectacle lenses
- atropine eye drops

Some treatments still under study are offered by high-street optometrists. These treatments do not cure or reduce myopia - they aim to slow down the rate at which it gets worse.

None of these treatments are currently approved and available for use on the NHS.

## Useful websites

www.mykidsvision.org



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