

# What is a Pediatric Ophthalmologist?

If your child has an eye problem, is having difficulty with a vision screening exam or has difficulty reading or learning, or needs surgery or medical treatment for an illness affecting the eyes, a *Pediatric Ophthalmologist* has the experience and qualifications to treat your child.

## What kind of training do pediatric ophthalmologists have?

Pediatric ophthalmologists are medical doctors who have had

- At least 4 years of medical school
- One year of medical or surgical internship
- At least 3 additional years of residency training in ophthalmology
- At least 1 additional year of fellowship training in pediatric ophthalmology

## What types of treatments do pediatric ophthalmologists provide?

Pediatric ophthalmologists can diagnose, treat, and manage all children's eye problems. Pediatric ophthalmologists generally provide the following services:

- Eye exams
- Perform surgery, microsurgery, and laser surgery (for problems like weak eye muscles, crossed eyes, wandering eyes, blocked tear ducts, retinal problems, and infections)
- Diagnose problems of the eye caused by diseases of the body such as diabetes or juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) and other medical and neurological diseases
- Diagnose visual processing disorders
- Care for eye injuries
- Prescribe eyeglasses and contact lenses

## Where can I find a pediatric ophthalmologist?

Pediatric ophthalmologists practice in a variety of medical institutions including children's hospitals, university medical centers, and large community hospitals.

## Pediatric ophthalmologists — the best care for children

Children are not just small adults. They cannot always say what is bothering them. They cannot always answer medical questions, and are not always able to be patient and cooperative during a medical examination. Pediatric ophthalmolo-

gists know how to examine and treat children in a way that makes them relaxed and cooperative. In addition, pediatric ophthalmologists use equipment specially designed for children. Most pediatric ophthalmologists' offices are arranged and decorated with children in mind. This includes the examination rooms and waiting rooms, which may have toys, videos, and reading materials for children. This helps create a comfortable and nonthreatening environment for your child.

If your pediatrician suggests that your child have his eyes checked, a pediatric ophthalmologist has the widest range of treatment options, the most extensive and comprehensive training, and the greatest expertise in dealing with children and in treating children's eye disorders.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

## From your doctor

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
Web site—[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

Copyright ©2000  
American Academy of Pediatrics