

# Mr Anthony G Tyers

FRCS FRCSEd FRCOphth

New Hall Hospital Bodenham Salisbury Wiltshire SP5 4EY

Secretary tel: 01722 439680/422333 fax: 01722 410143

## SURGERY FOR CHILDHOOD SQUINT

**Q *What is a squint?***

**A** The eyes normally look in the same direction. If they do not, a squint is present. Squint is also known as strabismus. A squint may be present all the time or only from time to time.

**Q *What is the cause of squint in children?***

**A** Many children with a squint are simply born with the eyes not straight. The reason is often not known. Other children with a squint are long-sighted or short-sighted and wearing glasses can help the squint. Much less commonly a squint may be due to one or more of the eye muscles not working properly.

**Q *What are the effects of a squint?***

**A** A squint which is present all the time may cause a "lazy eye".

**Q *What is a lazy eye?***

**A** If the vision does not develop normally in one eye it is said to be "lazy" or to have "amblyopia". The treatment is patching of the good eye to encourage the lazy eye to be used. Glasses may also be needed.

**Q *What is the treatment for squint?***

**A** If glasses are needed they are prescribed first. As well as improving vision they sometimes help the squint. Patching may also be needed if one eye is becoming lazy. This is usually done by Orthoptists who are experts at monitoring squints and who work in the Eye Department of the hospital. Surgery may be needed to straighten the eyes.

**Q *Does surgery help to treat a lazy eye?***

**A** No. Surgery simply straightens the eyes.

**Q *How is the surgery done?***

**A** Children are always asleep under general anaesthesia for squint surgery. During the operation, which may be on one or both eyes, the pull of the eye muscles is adjusted to straighten the eyes.

**Q** *Is it necessary to stay in hospital over night after the operation?*

**A** No. Squint surgery is usually done as a 'day case' operation.

**Q** *What are the results of squint surgery?*

**A** Most children require only one operation and the eyes then remain straight. Occasionally a second operation may be needed if the squint has not been fully corrected or if the eyes start to squint again at a later date.

**Q** *Are there any complications of squint surgery?*

**A** Complications are very uncommon. The operated eye will be rather red and may be slightly uncomfortable for a week or two. As mentioned above a second operation may occasionally be required.

*Further copies of this and other Information Sheets can be downloaded  
from the website [www.anthonityers.net](http://www.anthonityers.net)*