



Duane's Retraction Syndrome

Duane's syndrome is when one (or sometimes both) eyes don't turn to the side very well and the eyelids open and close as the eyes try to turn. Usually, it's difficult for the eye to look towards the side, away from the nose. Sometimes, it also cannot look towards the nose.

What causes it?

There are six muscles on the outside of each eyeball which move the eyes around. To move the eyes, the brain sends messages through nerves to the muscles. In people with Duane's syndrome, the nerves get connected wrongly so the messages from the brain go to the wrong muscles.

How the world looks to you

Most people with Duane's syndrome can see very well.

How you look to the world

When you look straight ahead, usually no one can tell you have Duane's syndrome. People may notice that your eyes don't move around properly, or that your eyes don't point straight some of the time, and you may look as if you're winking when you're not.

How can the doctor tell?

The orthoptist and the doctor will be able to tell you have Duane's syndrome simply by watching how your eyes move around.

Getting it sorted

You will need to come to the eye clinic from time to time to check you have good vision. Sometimes, we give you glasses or, in young children, an eyepatch for a few hours a day, to help you see well. Usually no other treatment is needed.

If the Duane's syndrome causes a lot of problems, like having to turn your head a lot, or if you have a noticeable squint even looking straight ahead, doctors can do an operation to make this better, but they cannot make your eye movements normal, even with an operation.

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**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS
Foundation Trust**
City Road, London EC1V 2PD
Phone: 020 7253 3411
www.moorfields.nhs.uk



Moorfields Direct telephone helpline

Phone: 020 7566 2345

Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm

Saturday, 9am-5pm

Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325

Email: moorfields.pals@nhs.net

Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs

