

Information for parents and carers

All about Uveitis

Introduction

This leaflet tells you about uveitis and how the condition detected and treated. We also explain the importance of regular eye examinations.

What is Uveitis?

Uveitis is inflammation that affects the inside of the eye. It starts gradually and can last for several months or years. Uveitis can affect one or both eyes.

Chronic Anterior Uveitis is the most common form of Uveitis. Chronic anterior uveitis initially causes no symptoms at all. The eye is not painful, red or watery, but if unrecognised and left untreated, anterior uveitis progresses and can cause very serious damage to the eye.

Early recognition of this complication is very important. An ophthalmologist uses an instrument called a slit lamp to examine the eye, which is a painless procedure.

Small children may not complain of eye problems. Please contact the ophthalmology team on **0191 2825467** if you notice that your child's eye looks different, including if your child:

- has unequal pupils (black centre of eye)
- has a different pupil shape
- child complains of blurry vision or "bits" in their eyes
- complains about being sensitive to light.

If you are worried out of hours or can't contact the team, you may need to take your child to A & E to get their eyes checked. You will need to tell the doctor your child may have uveitis.

Some children with arthritis are at high risk of developing uveitis as it is similar to inflammation in their joints.

How is uveitis treated?

Uveitis is usually treated with steroid eye drops. If the uveitis does not settle through drops alone, the doctor can prescribe medicines that comes as tablets or syrups or even as injections (for example steroids, methotrexate or biological therapies). These treatments require regular blood tests.

If the doctor decides your child needs treatment, the specialist nurse will support and guide you through the treatment options.

During this time, the ophthalmologist will check on the condition by repeating the slit lamp examination. After the medication is finished, your child must have his or her eyes checked again to be certain that the inflammation has stayed under control.

What is the long-term prognosis of Uveitis?

If left untreated, uveitis may have very serious consequences, including problems such as cloudiness of the lens of the eyes (cataract) and blindness. However, if treated in its early stages, it usually responds very well to therapy. Early diagnosis is, therefore, the major determinant of prognosis.

Regular check-ups are important.

- The inflammation can cause loss of vision even blindness if not detected early. Do not miss your appointment with the ophthalmologist.
- If you cannot attend your appointment phone the Eye Department to arrange another one (**0191 2825467**)

Contacts for further information or advice?

Paediatric Uveitis / Rheumatology Nurse Specialist

Telephone - **0191 2820373**

This is a 24 hour advice line where you leave a message, which is usually returned within 2 working days.

Secretary telephone 0191 2825318

Paediatric Ophthalmology Nurse: Telephone 0191 2829259

Ophthalmology secretary Telephone 0191 2825448

Other useful organisations:



Olivia's Vision

Email: contact@oliviasvision.org

Web: www.oliviasvision.org



Children's Chronic Arthritis Association

Email: info@ccaa.org.uk

Web: ccaa.org.uk/about-jia/treatment-of-jia/uveitis/