

Hypertropia in Children

This material will help you understand hypertropia, its causes and how it is treated.

What is hypertropia?

Hypertropia occurs when one eye turns upward. It is a form of strabismus, or eye misalignment. The eye may turn all the time or only part of the time making hypertropia constant or intermittent. Sometime stress or fatigue can worsen misalignment.

What causes hypertropia?

Hypertropia can be caused by an imbalance of muscle tone between the two eyes. Some common causes of hypertropia in children are:

- Fourth nerve palsy - Hypertropia can be caused by a weak fourth cranial nerve either from birth or from a secondary cause such as trauma. This nerve controls one muscle which helps move the eye downward. When this nerve is not working properly, the eye is unable to move down and remains higher than the other eye.
- Brown syndrome - In Brown's syndrome, hypertropia occurs from a restrictive effect on the muscle, causing difficulty in elevation of the affected eye.
- Trauma - Hypertropia may occur after many different types of trauma to the head or the eyes.

How is hypertropia treated?

Treatment for hypertropia varies with age and cause. Glasses and patching may be required to help a child's eyes develop properly. Sometimes, surgery is necessary to realign the eyes.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Author: Kristin Maurer, MPH Candidate
Reviewers: Marina Eisenberg, MD and Gale Oren, MILS

Patient Education by [University of Michigan Health System](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#).

Last Revised 4/2015