

Back To School...

Pens Paper Eye exam



Eighty percent of all learning is performed through vision.¹ An eye exam can assure parents that their child has the visual “tools” necessary to succeed in the classroom. A school’s or pediatrician’s vision screening does not address all of the same issues that a comprehensive eye examination does. The following is a checklist for parents to bring to a comprehensive eye exam so that they and their child can get the most from the visit.

1. Reason for eye examination

Why has it been decided that the child needs an eye exam? Is there a particular visual concern, or was the child referred by the school nurse, pediatrician or teacher? Has the child had a comprehensive eye exam before, and what was the result? Has the child had treatment for eye problems in the past, whether it be surgery, glasses, eye patching or exercises? Be sure the child as well as the parent is asked about any problems or concerns. See sidebar for things to mention.

2. Child’s medical history

Tell the doctor all of your child’s medical history, from the time the child was born. Prenatal and childbirth complications, prematurity, and low birth weight have been linked to eye disease. Explain any medical problems, including allergies, the child has had or is experiencing now, and bring a list of current medications the child is taking, as they can have an effect on the visual system.

3. Family medical history

Many eye conditions (like lazy eye, crossed eyes, nearsightedness and color vision defects) are inherited, so it is important for the doctor to know about family members who have had eye problems. Tell the doctor if the child has brothers or sisters, older or younger, and whether or not they have eye problems.

4. Classroom history

Learning difficulties can be associated with visual system disorders. Let the doctor know if the student is being helped with any additional educational programs, and if there are special concerns in the classroom, like reading below grade level.

A parent should discuss all concerns with the eye care provider, and feel comfortable accompanying the child into the exam room. Ask questions about the procedures the doctor is performing and how learning can be affected by the part of the visual system he or she is examining. The eye care provider, parent and the child should work as a team to be sure that the student has efficient visual skills necessary to excel in school.

¹ <http://www.aoa.org/childrens-vision.xml>



Symptoms of vision problems :

- ▶ Loses place while reading
- ▶ Holds reading material closer than normal
- ▶ Avoids close work
- ▶ Tends to rub eyes
- ▶ Has headaches
- ▶ Turns or tilts head
- ▶ Makes frequent reversals when reading or writing
- ▶ Uses finger to maintain place when reading
- ▶ Omits or confuses small words when reading
- ▶ Consistently performs below potential
- ▶ Squints while reading or watching television

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