

# Nystagmus

## FACTS:

- **Nystagmus is any form of involuntary, rhythmic eye movement. It may occur in horizontal, vertical or semicircular paths.**
- **This occurs when a child's brain believes the body is rotating for some reason, causing the eyes to move to compensate for the body's movement.**
- **It is a fairly common condition.**
- **Nystagmus may be inherited. It usually is not present in newborns but develops in the first few months of life. In older children and adults, it is usually a temporary, non-progressive condition that stops spontaneously.**
- **Some side effects of this condition are involuntary head twitching, vision loss, some difficulty with coordination and/or inability to recognize a person that is not totally familiar.**



**Nystagmus is a common condition affecting the eyes.**



**Children with albinism often have nystagmus.**



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## TREATMENT:

- There is no cure for nystagmus.
- If it does not stop on its own, it can be a lifelong condition.
- Nystagmus may be untreatable, but it does not have to stop a child from having a happy life.
- Eyewear can be used for less than perfect vision. Many times children with nystagmus learn to work around involuntary movements.
- Nystagmus can sometimes look scary to people, but understanding the condition helps care-givers interact as normally as possible with the children who have it.
- Most children with nystagmus can function and see well enough to read and to live an independent, normal life.



**Eyeglasses can help  
a child function  
more easily.**



- Occasionally nystagmus can be associated with more serious illnesses. A child with this disorder should see an eye doctor if possible.
- Encourage the child to use his eyes. Provide good lighting, large print books and big, bright, noisy, colored toys.
- Sometimes eyesight is improved in these children by using a different angle of vision.

**I love my sister!**