BIOS | BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

Orthoptic Department – what to expect at your appointment!

Adults Guide

What is an Orthoptist?

- Orthoptists are registered Allied Health Professionals regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) in the UK and CORU will be the regulator in the Republic of Ireland.
- You may see them working in a hospital setting or out in the community.

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hcpc health & care professions council

Why might you see an Orthoptist?

- Orthoptists are trained specialists in diagnosing and providing non-surgical management of disorders of eye movements and associated vision defects.

- Examples of when you might see one:
  - If you have binocular vision problems, this is the inability to use both your eyes together correctly. You may have symptoms such as eye strain, headaches and/or double vision.
  - If you have strabismus, which is when one eye turns away from the normal position.
  - If you have had an injury or have a disease which is affecting the eye muscles or the nerve supplying the muscles resulting in abnormal eye movements.
  - If you have double vision, which may be caused by strabismus or abnormal eye movements.

Prior to your appointment

- You should receive a letter in the post a couple of weeks before your appointment.
- The letter will contain details of where and when you need to attend your appointment.
- The letter should also inform you of who you will see at this appointment. For example, orthoptist only or orthoptist and doctor appointment.

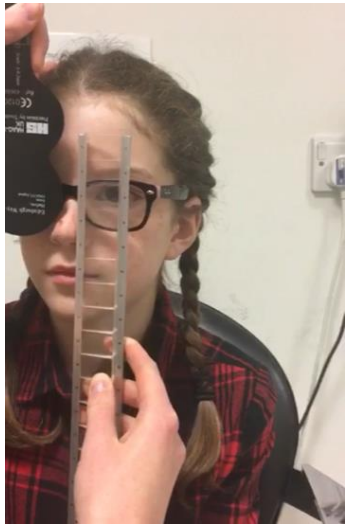
When you arrive at your appointment

- You should check in at the reception and take a seat in the waiting room.
- You will be then called in by the Orthoptist who will be performing some tests. The Orthoptist you see may be Male or Female.
- Orthoptic appointments may take up to one hour and in some instances this may be considerably longer if further tests are required.

The Orthoptist will then perform tests to help them come to a diagnosis

Vision Test – so the Orthoptist is aware of what you can see

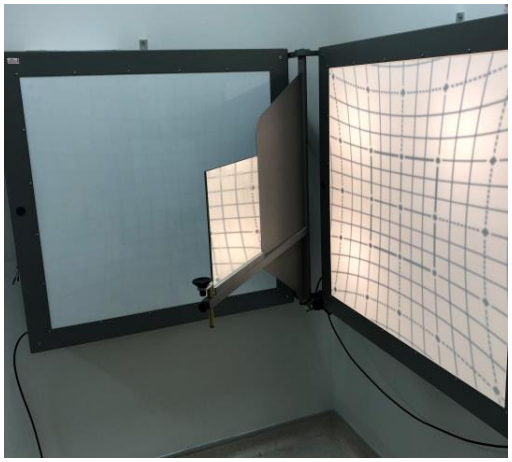
Cover Test – so the Orthoptist can identify strabismus or movement of your eye



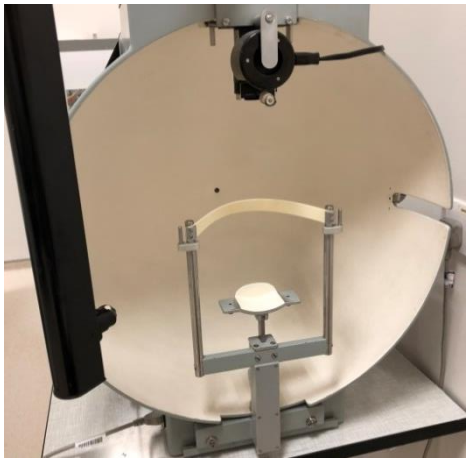
Prism Cover Test – so the Orthoptist can measure strabismus or movement of your eyes

Orthoptic Tests

Ocular Movements – so the Orthoptist can look at your eye movements



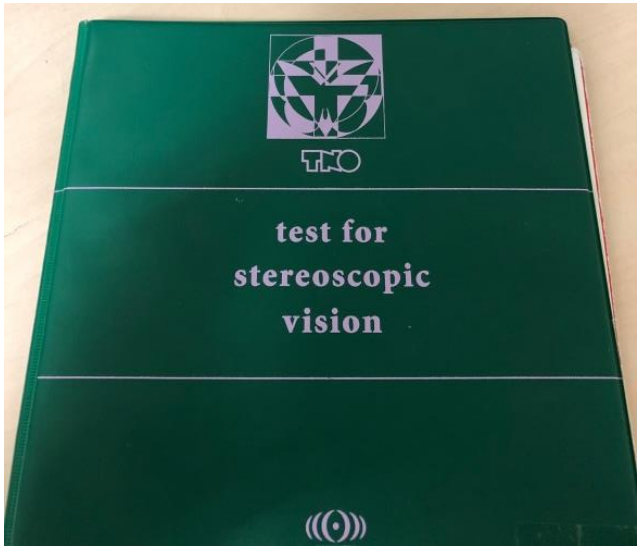
Lees Screen – this test helps us record your eye movements in a diagrammatic and easily replicable way



Goldman – we may use this test to quantify the amount of movement in your eyes, plot where you get double vision or look at your visual field

Orthoptic Tests

RAF Rule – we may use this test to look at how well you can move your eyes inwards (converge) or how well you can focus your eyes (accommodate)



Frisby & TNO tests – we may use one of these two tests to look at how well you use your two eyes together as a pair

Orthoptic Tests

Synoptophore – we may use this test to look at any movement in your eyes or to look at how well you use your eyes together as a pair (binocular vision)

OKN Drum – we may use this test to look at your fast and slow eye movements

We may give you..

Fresnel Prism – to join any double vision you may be experiencing

Orthoptic exercises – to help strengthen your eye muscles & help your eyes work together as a pair

Eye patch or tape – if your double vision cannot be joined with a prism

You may also see a doctor

- The doctor will also perform tests and discuss any further tests they would like to do to help them diagnose and/or treat you

They may use this piece of equipment to look at your eyes in greater detail

They may look at the back of your eye with a lens to check the health of your eye

They may check your eye pressure

You may be sent for some further tests

- Some of the following tests may also be performed
- These tests may be on the same day or booked for another day

Blood tests – these may be performed for numerous reasons

CT scan – to identify any orbital injuries or look at your blood flow

Further Tests

MRI – to look at your brain and brainstem in more detail

Electrodiagnostic tests – these may be performed to look for any unexplained causes of reduced vision or to diagnose specific conditions such as Albinism

OCT – this is a non-invasive test that we use to image the back of your eye (retina)

Summary

- Treatment – at the end of your appointment the Orthoptist will discuss and agree with you a treatment plan that is best for you. This may involve referral to other departments.
- They may arrange a follow-up appointments.
- Changing the appointments – it may be necessary for you to change an appointment because of unforeseen circumstances. If this is the case please telephone the department as far in advance as possible to re-arrange your appointment.
- We hope that this has provided you with some more information about what to expect at your appointment with the Orthoptist.