

## **STRABISMUS SURGERY: ITS SAFE AND SIMPLE**

A strabismus is present when the eyes are not straight. The term 'squint' may be used interchangeably.

Incidence: About one in 20 children has a squint. A squint may be congenital, traumatic e.g. (a head injury) or neurovascular (eg. As a result of a stroke). Most squints occur in children and usually becomes apparent after birth up to about age three years.

Sometimes, the squint develops in older children and in adults. In children the squinting eye may become amblyopic or lazy because it is not being used to see. Treatment is to patch the good eye, this forces the wayward eye to develop. Certain types of squints may be corrected with glasses, sometimes surgery is needed to achieve correction.

Children with squints often suffer teasing and ridicule by their peers resulting in poor self-esteem and psychological problems. This may continue into adulthood where they may be overlooked for job promotions or for certain sporting activities. Ideally, squint surgery should be done during childhood but for various reasons in Jamaica such as access to facility, many cases are seen in adults.

In children, the surgical procedure is done under general anaesthesia, in adults, local anaesthesia may be an option.

The procedure involves detaching the eye muscles and reattaching them at certain specific points resulting in the eye becoming straight. Sometimes it is enough to operate on only one eye, at other times, both eyes may need to be operated on to straighten the eyes.

Problems of squint surgery may include:

- Over correction, which can easily be corrected afterwards
- Under correction, which can also be easily corrected afterwards

Here are some before and after pictures of squint surgeries done recently.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE:**  
**LEFT EXOTOPIA**



**AFTER:**  
**OVER CORRECTED**



**FINAL CORRECTION**

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