

Common Childhood Vision Disorders

1. Refractive Errors

Refractive errors occur when the eye does not bend (refract) light properly. They are the most common cause of vision problems in children.

- **Myopia (Nearsightedness):** Trouble seeing far away; distant objects look blurry.
- **Hyperopia (Farsightedness):** Trouble focusing up close; reading may be difficult.
- **Astigmatism:** Blurred or distorted vision at all distances due to an irregular cornea.

2. Amblyopia (Lazy Eye)

Amblyopia occurs when the brain favors one eye over the other, leading to reduced vision in the weaker eye.

- Often caused by strabismus, significant refractive error, or eye obstruction (e.g., ptosis).
- Without treatment, vision loss can become permanent.

3. Strabismus (Eye Misalignment)

A condition where the eyes do not align or work together.

- Types include **esotropia** (eye turns inward), **exotropia** (turns outward), **hypertropia** (up), or **hypotropia** (down).
- Can lead to amblyopia if not corrected.

4. Convergence Insufficiency

Difficulty coordinating both eyes when focusing on close tasks, such as reading.

- Symptoms include eye strain, headaches, double vision, and loss of place while reading.

5. Color Vision Deficiency (Color Blindness)

Difficulty distinguishing certain colors, typically reds and greens.

- Often hereditary and more common in boys.
- Affects classroom tasks that use color coding.

6. Ptosis (Drooping Eyelid)

Drooping of one or both eyelids that may block part of the child's vision.

- Can contribute to amblyopia if severe.

7. Cataracts (Pediatric Cataracts)

Cloudiness of the eye's lens that can be present at birth or develop in childhood.

- Can cause visual impairment and require surgical correction.

8. Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)

Occurs in premature infants when abnormal blood vessels grow in the retina.

- Can affect vision development and may require treatment.

9. Nystagmus

Uncontrolled, repetitive eye movements that may reduce vision and make it difficult to focus.

10. Ocular Allergies (Allergic Conjunctivitis)

While not a structural vision disorder, allergies can cause blurred vision, itching, tearing, and discomfort impacting school performance.

Resources

<https://preventblindness.org/eye-problems-adults-children/>

<https://aapos.org/home>