

Ptosis (Blepharoptosis)



Description

Ptosis is the drooping or sagging of the upper eyelid when the eye is open.

The condition is caused by the paralysis of, or weakening of, the eyelid muscles. The levator muscles (responsible for opening the eye) do not function fully, causing droopy eyelids.

The condition may be congenital, due to incomplete development of the muscles, or may be caused by paralysis of the relevant nerves, (due to trauma or other causes).

Ptosis can occur in one eye (unilateral) or both eyes (bilateral) and may be constant or intermittent. Ptosis in one eye is the most common form.

Implications

Depending on the severity of the condition, a drooping upper eyelid can block or greatly reduce vision depending on the degree of obstruction to the pupil.

If the eyelid droops enough to partially cover the pupil, a student may compensate by raising their eyebrow and/or tilting their head back. Over time, compensatory head postures may contribute to head and neck musculoskeletal concerns.

Amblyopia (lazy eye) may develop if a drooping eyelid obscures the pupil completely and astigmatism may also be associated with the condition.

Occasionally the eye will not fully close whilst asleep and ophthalmic ointment or drops may be prescribed to prevent the eye from drying out.

Ptosis surgery can restore droopy upper eyelids to a more normal position with long-lasting results. However, after several years, some eyelid drooping may return.

Accessing the curriculum

Provide seating at the front of the class to ensure the student has the best possible view of the teaching focus.

Allow the student to find their best compensatory head posture.

Consider slightly enlarging print size, however this may exacerbate access challenges.

Ensure all provided print and digital materials are clear, uncluttered and strongly contrasting.

Reduce visual clutter by ensuring learning materials are well spaced and well organised on a page.

Remove unnecessary visual information.

Use bullet points rather than long narrative text when presenting information.

Avoid reflective surfaces and provide good lighting. Task lighting may assist.

Use additional verbal descriptions to support instruction and understanding.

Consider the impact of visual fatigue and offer eye rest time after prolonged reading and writing activities.

Modify physical activities and provide detailed verbal instructions of all actions, skills, and rules of the game (where necessary). Provision of verbal cues in catching and throwing activities may assist.

Click to see an [Interactive Eye Diagram](#) (web link)

As this document contains generic information, please consult with the Vision Education Program in regard to individual educational needs.

References

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