

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR PARENTS ON EXAM DAY

### Things to know about the eye exam:

- A doctor of optometry, working with children, should be able to get an idea of your child's vision. They will have a variety of eye charts and tests to determine your child's vision, regardless of their age or verbal abilities.
- You will be doing some waiting, especially if your child's eyes will be dilated, which is likely, and especially if this is your child's first eye exam.
- Even though most of the exam does not hurt, a lot of kids respond nervously, especially when the doctor is looking in their eyes.
- Dilating eye drops sting, but it's temporary.

### Preparing your child for their first eye exam:

- It is natural for your child to feel some apprehension with a new experience. If your child is old enough, talk with your child about the examination prior to the visit and introduce them to some of the things that will happen at the exam. Let your child know that there won't be any shots involved. Mostly, the exam will be like playing games: watching toys and naming shapes.
- Most pediatric eye exams will take at least an hour, and part of that will be waiting while dilating drops take effect.
- Make a game of it. For younger children, you can practice looking at pictures and making it fun.
- You may also want to practice eye drops and looking in your child's eye, two other events that will happen at the exam. Your child will likely

have drops to dilate their eyes, it helps the eye doctor get a better view inside the eye, and see the health of the eye. But very few kids like getting the drops. If you have a small bottle, you can pretend to put drops in a stuffed animal or doll's eye. Then simulate putting drops in your child's eye. Have them tip their head back, close their eyes, say, "drop" and then have them blink.

- Then you might use a magnifying glass to look closely in your child's eyes.

### Scheduling the appointment:

- Ask the office how long the appointment will be, and try to schedule the appointment before or after child's naptime.
- When scheduling an eye exam for your child, choose a time when your child is alert and happy.

### Things to bring:

- Encourage your child to bring a favorite toy or stuffed animal to have its eyes checked.
- Diapers (if needed).
- Toys to play with while waiting for the appointment and waiting for the drops to take effect.
- Snacks – especially if the exam is scheduled over a time when your child is likely to be hungry.
- Sunglasses – if your child's eyes will be dilated. However, most practices will provide post-dilation glasses.
- List of medicines that your child is currently taking.
- Medical history for your child, and any family history of vision problems.
- List of questions that you have for the doctor.