

# Patient Information re Patching Therapy

## Introduction

There are four ways to use patching therapy:

- **Test** patch a minute to half an hour each eye, to know if vision is the same in both eyes. Can be useful if done every couple of months.
- **Preventative patch** where amblyopia (lazy sight) is very likely, such as in one-sided squint.
- **Treatment patch**, often 15-20 hours, sometimes 50 - 70 hours per week, when vision is unequal between the two eyes. Treatment patching means placing the patch over the good eye to improve the weak eye. The ultimate goal is that spontaneously, either eye will be the one that is fixing rather than only one eye fixing.
- **Maintenance patch** to keep the vision achieved by treatment until vision matures. This continues up to **withdrawal, usually around age 7-8 years.**

## Ways to do patching:

- **Patching on the Skin:**

Place the patch, directly onto the skin, on the good eye.

You may use: For example, opticlude (all brands are OK) orthoptic patches, (small or large, depending on the child's age); or, Mefix (paper) tape; or

2" Likeskin, with a tissue cut out as an eyepad; or,

2" Micropore, with a tissue cut out as an eyepad; or,

2" Leukopore, with a tissue cut out as an eyepad;

All these products are available from the chemist.

If your child keeps pulling off the patches, use a piece of tissue or material the size of a 20 cent coin. Make the piece of tissue or material larger if the skin is sensitive.

It may be useful to ask your child to assist you in making some patches and then stick them by one corner onto the refrigerator, so they are nearby for use at home.

- **Patching on the Glasses:** Place one layer of clear Contact or one layer of coloured Contact over the glasses lens of the good eye.
- Be aware that there will most likely be another child at kindergarten/school who is also wearing a patch.
- **Atropine:** An alternative to patching is to use Atropine drops to the good eye. These can be used one drop, weekly or fortnightly, often increased in school holidays to twice weekly. Pressure on the sac next to the nose for one minute minimizes any side effects. A specific handout about side effects is available.
- **Ezepatch** – Of washable material with a picture on it, like a sock that goes over the spectacles.
- **Optical penalization** – If there is significant refractive error in the good eye, remove the lens from a spare pair of glasses. Child wears these part time, instead of patching.