

Ptosis (droopy eyelid)

A ptosis (pronounced 'toe-sis') is a condition where the eyelid 'droops' over the eye. It can affect one eye or both eyes. A ptosis may be present at birth (congenital) or occur later in the life (acquired). The eyelid may droop only slightly (mild ptosis) or may cover the pupil or eye entirely (severe ptosis).

Signs of a Ptosis

Drooping of one or both eyelids; this may be more obvious when the child is tired or at the end of the day. If the child's vision is affected, they may tilt their head back or try to raise their eyebrows to see underneath the droopy eyelid.



Causes of Ptosis

- Eyelid muscle weakness, where the muscle (levator) does not function correctly resulting in a droopy eyelid
- Damage to the nerves that control the muscles of the eyelid
- Muscular diseases
- Loose skin of the upper eyelid/s
- Eyelid tumours

Problems a ptosis can cause

Permanent vision loss: In the case of a severe ptosis, the eyelid may restrict or block the visual development of that eye resulting in vision loss (amblyopia, also known as a lazy eye). If untreated this vision loss may become permanent.

Over time issues may occur in the head and neck from abnormal head postures.

Treating a ptosis

If a ptosis is moderate to severe in size, treatment is necessary to allow normal visual development. Surgery to lift the eyelid may be required if the eyelid is blocking the visual axis or if the chin up head tilt is significant. An Ophthalmologist will perform the surgery to restore the appearance and function of the eyelid. If the eyelid movement does not return completely, or the height of the eyelid is not satisfactory, more than one surgical procedure may be required.

If amblyopia is present with a ptosis, patching therapy is required to strengthen the amblyopic eye.

