



Central California Pediatrics

AUGUST 2020

Specialty information for physicians who treat children and expectant mothers.



Referral Guidelines for Pediatric Ophthalmology

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Pediatric Ophthalmology - Valley Children's Healthcare

There are two types of eye doctors: ophthalmologists and optometrists. Ophthalmologists attend medical school and are trained in surgery and medical problems. Pediatric ophthalmologists complete an ophthalmologist residency then attend a fellowship to specialize in pediatric eye health and surgery. Optometrists are healthcare professionals who receive a doctor of optometry (OD) degree after completing four years of optometry school, preceded by three or more years of college.

They are licensed to practice optometry, which primarily involves performing eye exams and vision tests, prescribing and dispensing corrective lenses, detecting certain eye abnormalities and prescribing medications for certain eye diseases. While both eye care providers assess vision and the need for glasses, often optometrists will refer to a pediatric ophthalmologist if the child has an eye problem better suited for management by a pediatric ophthalmologist. It's this coordinated effort that provides pediatric patients with the best vision care.

When to Refer to an Ophthalmologist Directly

There are some pediatric vision and eye conditions where a referral should be made to an ophthalmologist directly, such as if any abnormal red reflexes are observed. This includes an absent, white, dull, opacified or asymmetric red reflex. Any abnormal reflex warrants an immediate referral and, in most cases, a conversation between the referring doctor and the ophthalmologist. Other cases that warrant an immediate referral to ophthalmology include structural abnormalities such as ptosis, irregular shape, unequal pupil size or reaction to light, asymmetric or displaced corneal light reflex.

During annual vision screenings, referral to a pediatric ophthalmologist should occur if:

- A child is unable to fix and follow by 6 months when uncooperative, or by 3 months in cooperative infants
- Failed instrument-based screening at 1 year or older
- Refixation movement in cover testing in 3 year-olds or older
- Distance visual acuity is worse than:
 - 20/50 or vision disparity of two lines or greater in children 3 years old and older**
 - 20/40 at 4 years old or older**
 - Three of five optotypes on the 20/30 line or two-line difference between eyes in children 5 years old or older.**

Referral Guidelines for Pediatric Ophthalmology continued

Failure of these vision screening tests potentially identify, amblyopia, childhood glaucoma, strabismus, ptosis, uveitis, cataracts or tumors.

The presence of chromosomal or congenital anomalies, systemic disease such as arthritis, diabetes mellitus, neurofibromatosis, sickle cell, metabolic disorders, brain tumors or craniosynostosis should also be referred to pediatric ophthalmology for assessment.

Any traumatic eye injuries should be assessed immediately in the emergency department by ophthalmology for surgical or medical intervention. It is recommended patients who are seen in the ED be followed up in an ophthalmology clinic.

Both optometrists and ophthalmologists play an important role in maintaining a child's eye health. When making referrals, selecting the right specialty for your patients will ensure they receive the most timely and appropriate care.

CME Events

Every month, Valley Children's hosts a variety of CME opportunities. See a full list and register in our CME tracker: <https://cmetracker.net/VCH/>

Physician Wellness Series:

Mental Health for Essential Healthcare Providers in the Age of COVID-19

Thursday, September 10, 2020, 12:15pm - 1pm | Friday, September 11, 2020, 7:15am - 8am

Join us as we help identify stress and modifiable health behaviors to improve overall mental health functioning among essential healthcare providers and practice evidence-based techniques to reduce and better manage stress and associated mental health difficulties.

Presented by Dr. Ashley Cole • Presentation Modality: WebEx

Religious Beliefs & Practices – Native American Culture

Thursday, September 17, 2020, 12:15pm - 1pm

Presented by Ron Goode • Presentation Modality: Zoom

Medical Staff News

The following pediatric specialists recently joined Valley Children's:

Anesthesiology

Kamyar Bahmanpour, MD

Cardiology

Bakersfield
Eagle Oaks Specialty Care Center
Rachel Manalo, DO

Genetics

Jeremy Woods, MD

Hospitalist

Kaweah Delta
Ashish Loomba, MD

Pathology

Cynthia Fata, MD
Elizabeth Martinez, DO