



## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Amblyopia is a Medical Condition

A Joint Statement of the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus and the American Academy of Ophthalmology

### **Policy**

Amblyopia is a medical condition that requires medical treatment. Amblyopia (ICD-10 codes; H53.001, H53.002, H53.003, H53.011, H53.012, H53.013, H53.021, H53.022, H53.023, H53.031, H53.032, H53.033, H53.041, H53.042 and H53.043) is typically a preventable and treatable form of vision loss caused by developmental abnormalities of the brain's vision centers. Unless amblyopia is treated promptly during childhood, permanent structural changes occur in the brain of the amblyopic child, resulting in decreased visual function.

Current methods of preschool vision screening can identify risk factors (primarily high levels of refractive error and anisometropia) that, if untreated, increase the likelihood of amblyopia developing. Therefore, these amblyopia risk factors should also be considered medical conditions.

Optical correction such as eyeglasses or contact lenses may be medically indicated as a part of amblyopia treatment in addition to other modalities, such as patching and/or pharmacologic treatment.

Unless amblyopia is treated during childhood, recovery of vision is rarely achieved.

Approved by:                    American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus  
    Board of Directors, March 2002, April 2017  
    American Academy of Ophthalmology Board of Trustees, April 2002

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