

Even in a pandemic, child vision tests are crucial

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It's critical for parents to maintain their children's vision checkups

during the COVID-19 pandemic, an expert says.

"All children should have their eyes checked by their pediatrician at [regular intervals](#), even if they don't have any symptoms," said Dr. Samantha Feldman, a pediatric ophthalmologist at the Krieger Eye Institute in Baltimore.

"Part of the reason that [vision screening](#) is so important is because it gives us the opportunity to detect and treat patients that otherwise may be at risk of permanent and lifelong visual disability," she said in a LifeBridge Health news release.

Screening is necessary because your child may not be able to describe [vision problems](#) to you.

"They might not even know their eyesight isn't normal because it might be normal for them," Feldman said. "So, it's really important to get these screenings done to find the problems that could be easily missed."

It's important to detect early signs of [vision](#) problems before children become teenagers and adults because problems in developing eyes may still be correctable in the first five to seven years of life.

Medical offices have introduced COVID-19 safety protocols for in-person visits. Measures include taking patients' temperatures, asking [screening](#) questions about their symptoms before they enter the office area, and spacing out seats in waiting areas, Feldman noted.

To help you feel more comfortable, ask your doctor's office about safety procedures they have in place before you make an appointment.

If a pediatrician suspects that your child has a vision problem, they will refer the child to a pediatric ophthalmologist for further testing.

Children should be referred to an ophthalmologist if they have signs of misaligned eyes (strabismus), refractive errors (myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism) that can lead to poor vision, certain systemic diseases or a family history of eye disease, among other problems, according to Feldman.

Notify your [health care provider](#) if you think you have COVID-19 and follow their instructions.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on [vision screenings](#).

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