

Cover-Uncover Test Screening Protocol

What Are You Testing?

The Cover-Uncover Test provides an objective measure of eye alignment. It determines the presence of heterotropias (manifest deviations).

What You Need to Do the Test:

1. A black plastic occluder.
2. Detailed distance and near fixation targets, as provided by VIP.
3. A chair for the examiner.

Getting Ready:

1. Set up the distance fixation target poster on the wall, 10 feet from where the child will stand. Have the near (40 cm) targets nearby.
2. The child should stand with his back against the wall, facing the distance fixation target. The examiner should be seated next to the child. The examiner's chair should be turned towards the child but the examiner must not block the child's view of the distance fixation target.

How You Do the Test:

1. First, do the test at 10 feet.
2. Have the child look at the distance fixation target and direct his attention to the details of the target.
3. Introduce the occluder over the child's left eye, leave the occluder in front of the left eye for approximately three seconds, and then uncover the child's left eye.
4. Keep the occluder in front of the eye long enough on each cover stroke to allow for full dissociation and re-fixation if a strabismus is present.
5. Look for any movement of the right (uncovered) eye when the left eye is covered.
6. Repeat the cover-uncover stroke a minimum of 3 times on each eye. You may use more repetitions, if necessary, to determine the presence of the deviation.
7. Make certain that the occluder completely covers the eye on each cover stroke.

Any and all use of these documents should cite the following reference: The Vision in Preschoolers Study Group. Comparison of Preschool Vision Screening Tests as Administered by Licensed Eye Care Professionals in the Vision in Preschoolers Study. Ophthalmology 2004;111:637-650.

8. Repeat the procedure with the occluder covering and uncovering the right eye.
9. If movement is detected when testing either the right or left eye, the child is strabismic.
10. Repeat the test at 40 cm using the near targets, testing both the right and left eyes as described above for the distance target.

What You Tell the Child:

1. When viewing the distance or near targets, have the child describe the characteristics of the object or objects on the target to help maintain the child's fixation on the target.

What You Write Down:

1. If you are unable to perform the Cover-Uncover Test on the child, mark the child as "Unable" on the recording form.
2. Record the Distance Cover-Uncover Test and the Near (40 cm) Cover-Uncover test separately on the recording form. For each test distance, record whether the right eye moves ("Yes" or "No") when the left eye is covered, and whether the left eye moves ("Yes" or "No") when the right eye is covered.
3. Mark "Incomplete Procedure" ("**R**ight eye", "**L**eft eye", or "**B**oth eyes") for the Distance and/or Near Cover-Uncover test if the test is aborted (e.g., due to the child's uncooperativeness).

Remember!

1. Fully cover the eye with the occluder.
2. Allow a period of binocular viewing between each cover-uncover stroke of the occluder.
3. Direct the child's attention to the details of the targets.
4. Watch the eye NOT being covered for movement.