

The next time you take your baby or child to the doctor for a check-up, make sure a standard eye exam is included. Standard exams (using a special instrument called an ophthalmoscope) can catch common vision problems and more severe conditions, such as cataracts or tumors. Early detection is vital to saving sight and lives. That's why eye exams should start at birth and continue at every well visit.

### When your child's eyes are examined...

- The room should be dark.
- The doctor should spend 15 to 20 seconds looking thoroughly at the back of your child's eyes using a direct **ophthalmoscope**.
- Infants should have their eyes dilated before the exam because of their small pupils. The eye dilation exam is recommended three times in the first year of life: at birth or within the first two weeks, at the six- to eight-week well baby visit and again at the six- to eight-month well baby visit. Of course, an ophthalmoscope should be used in a dark room at every infant exam.
- The doctor should test for how well your child can see close up, far away and to the sides.
- The doctor should also check for irregular eye movement, whether both eyes are focusing together and hand-eye coordination.



Ophthalmoscope

### Parents can be their child's vision detectives, too. Be alert between exams!

- Check family photos for any irregularities with your child's eyes. (Are both eyes red when a flash is used? A white pupil could mean a problem.) **Parents photograph eye diseases of their children about 60 percent of the time.** Retinoblastoma, a pediatric cancer presenting from birth to five years of age, is very often photographed because it glows brighter than any other eye disease developing on the back of the eye
- Look for any irregular eye movement, especially one or both eyes rolling inward, or eye fatigue when playing or reading.
- Listen for complaints of headaches, stinging, red watery itchy eyes, blurry vision or trouble seeing in school.
- Sometimes no clues at all. Make sure the ophthalmoscope is being used correctly at every well check- up.



**Detecting eye problems today will go a long way  
in ensuring your child is healthy, happy and ready for school!**

For more information, call 561-586-2094 or  
[www.lovejoey.com](http://www.lovejoey.com)

# Healthy Eyes Begin at Birth



**888-634-7900**

[www.EveryParentPBC.org](http://www.EveryParentPBC.org)

Does your doctor use an  
ophthalmoscope in a dark room?