



## **Eyeglasses for Infants and Children**

Prescriptions for eyeglasses can be measured in even the youngest and most uncooperative children by using a special instrument called a **retinoscope** to analyze the light reflected through the pupil from the back of the eye.

Most lenses for children's eyeglasses are made of polycarbonate lens material, which is stronger and lighter than glass. It is a good idea to request a scratch-resistant coating on children's lenses. Children can be rough with glasses, and plastic lenses scratch easily.

Color tints or tints that respond to changes in light can be incorporated into eyeglass lenses. For children, the tint should not be so dark that the child has trouble seeing indoors.

Frames come in all shapes and sizes. Choose one that fits comfortably but securely. There are devices that keep eyeglasses securely in place, a good idea for active children and young children with flat nasal bridges. Cable temples, which wrap around the back of the ears, are good for toddlers. Infants may require a strap across the top and back of the head instead of earpieces. Flexible hinges hold the eyeglasses in position, allow the glasses to "grow" with the child, and prevent the side arms from breakage.

Often children do not like wearing their eyeglasses although the prescription is correct. Distraction, positive reinforcement, and incentives can help children develop the habit of wearing their glasses. If all else fails, your ophthalmologist can prescribe an eyedrop that blurs vision when the glasses are not in place. This often helps overcome the child's initial resistance to wearing glasses.