

This material will help you understand aniridia and how it is treated.

What is aniridia?

Aniridia is an eye disorder where the iris is completely or partially absent. The iris is the colored part of the eye that surrounds the black pupil. People with aniridia have large pupils. The condition affects both eyes.

How does aniridia affect my child's eyesight?

Aniridia alone does not affect your child's visual acuity. Some children with aniridia have very good vision (20/30 or better) whereas others have very poor vision (20/200 or worse). However, because aniridia causes the pupils to be large, your child may have sensitivity to light and glare. Aniridia is also associated with other eye conditions including:

- Cataracts (clouding of the eye lens)
- Glaucoma (increased eye pressure)
- Nystagmus (wobbly eyes)
- Scarring of the cornea (the front of the eye)

What causes aniridia?

Aniridia is caused by a genetic mutation. The mutation affects the PAX6 gene, which is involved in the early development of the eyes, brain, spinal cord, and pancreas. There are different ways that the mutation can be inherited. In some cases, aniridia is part of a syndrome. A syndrome is a group of medical conditions that occur together. The following syndromes involve aniridia:

- Miller syndrome (aniridia and Wilm's (kidney) tumor)
- WAGR syndrome (Wilm's (kidney) tumor, aniridia, genital abnormalities, and mental retardation)

- Gillepsie's syndrome (aniridia, mental retardation, and balance problems)

How is aniridia treated?

Glasses or contacts can help your child see more clearly. There are special types of glasses and contacts available that can also help reduce sensitivity to light.

Because aniridia is associated with other eye conditions, it is also very important that your child has regular eye exams. During eye exams, your child's eye doctor will screen for other conditions. If your child has glaucoma, it can be treated with eye drops. If your child has a cataract, the eye doctor may recommend removal of the lens. Children with aniridia also need a thorough physical exam to look for associated medical conditions.

How will aniridia affect my child in school?

Most children with aniridia can be successful in regular classrooms. Let your child's school know about the condition. If your child needs extra support, the school can provide your child with resources.

For more information, scan these codes with your smartphone or visit the websites listed.



<http://www.aapos.org/terms/conditions/26>

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