

Breakthrough in Vision Care

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LOS ANGELES -- Remember getting your eyes checked by a doctor when you were a kid?

You'd have to close one eye and read the Snellen Eye Chart that's far away. Well technology has caught up with the old eye chart, helping detect eye problems in children as young as six months old.

One year old Daniel Vazquez likes to think he can talk with his "coo's" and "ahh's" and occasional "momma's". His parents might understand what he's trying to say, but most everyone else can't. And that includes his pediatric ophthalmologist who normally would have to wait till Daniel was old enough to talk and take a standard eye chart vision test to detect any problems.

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to determine if a child's eyes are working together and seeing the same thing, or if a vision problem like amblyopia (lazy eye) is present.

Vision deficits like amblyopia are one of the most common pediatric health problems in the US and like Deafness, it's important to detect and treat this silent vision when children are young because the brain's vision system is almost fully developed by age eight. VEP allows pediatricians to test for amblyopia earlier than ever before because the technology doesn't require a patient's response.

The Enfant, which is covered by most insurance plans, is making it's way into pediatrician's offices across the country. Here's how it works□Electrodes are placed on the child's head, the lights in the room are turned off and cartoons start playing on the TV screen. But these aren't typical cartoons because they are often interrupted by varying images of lines. The Enfant analyzes how the eyes and brain recognize the lines to determine if a vision problem is present.

Daniel's mom, Megan, knows by getting this test done early, it could prevent big problems down the road. She worries that if he had vision problems that weren't detected early, he could possibly have a hard time seeing the blackboard at school. And that could make him frustrated or feeling powerless. She's glad that this new test is available for her baby and others. And doctors say it could help kids from developing life long visual problems that even glasses or surgery can't fix.

For more information go to www.enfantvision.com

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