

Conjunctival foreign body (something in your eye)

You have attended the Emergency Department with a foreign body in the eye. This leaflet explains how to care for your eye at home now that the foreign body has been removed.

Removing the foreign body

A small foreign body was removed from your eye. At this time there does not appear to be damage to your eye. Specks of metal, sand, or wood commonly cause this injury. It often occurs during windy weather and when working with power tools. Sometimes, a local anaesthetic is used to remove a foreign body. This is a medication that makes the tissues around the eye numb. Your eye may be uncomfortable when the local anaesthetic wears off. This is especially true if the cornea was scratched. The cornea is the very sensitive clear membrane over the front of the eye. Blinking the eye may increase the pain. Sometimes, a patch is applied for comfort. The more you rest your “good eye”, the better both eyes will feel.

Caring for your eye at home

If you have been given an eye patch to wear:

- Keep your eye patch on until your follow-up appointment.
- Do not remove the patch unless instructed to do so to put in medications; replace patch and re-tape it as it was before. Follow the same procedure if the patch becomes loose.
- Do not drive or operate machinery while your eye is patched. Your ability to judge distances is impaired.
- If you weren't given an eye patch:
- Keep your eye closed as much as possible if there is discomfort.
- Do not rub your eye.
- You may wear dark glasses to protect your eyes from bright light.
- Wear protective eye covering if your job or hobby involves the risk of eye injury. This is especially important when working with high speed tools.
- Use paracetamol or ibuprofen for relief of pain and discomfort.

Eye drops

In order to prevent infection in your eye after an eye injury, you may be prescribed a course of eye drops and ointment containing an antibiotic called chloramphenicol, although this is not suitable for all patients. Most people will need to take the eye drops four times a day, and use the ointment at night before bed, for seven days.

If you normally wear contact lenses, you should not do so until your eye injury has completely healed. If you are prescribed antibiotic eye drops, you should not start wearing your contact lenses again until 24 hours after finishing your treatment.

Further tests or treatment

You may be advised by the Emergency Department team to go to Eye Casualty. This is located on Level 2 Eye Block and is open:

Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm (last attendance slot at 4.15pm)

Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays 9.00am – 12.30pm

Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

What to look out for

Go back to the nearest Emergency Department or Eye Casualty if you experience any of the following:

- Pain increases in your eye or your vision changes.
- You have problems with your eye patch.
- The injury to your eye seems to be getting worse.
- You develop any kind of discharge from the injured eye.
- Swelling and/or inflammation (soreness) develops around the affected eye.
- You develop an oral temperature above 38°C (102°F).

Tell us your views

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your treatment and care, please speak to a senior member of staff or to the nurse looking after you. The matrons are also available during normal working hours and they welcome your views.

You can also pick up a copy of the Trust leaflet called 'Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)', which explains how you can raise concerns or give feedback on your experience at the hospital.

Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – Overall, how was your experience of our service? – by going online www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/friends-and-family-survey.htm.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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