



S P O R T M E D I C I N E & S C I E N C E
C O U N C I L O F M A N I T O B A

Emergency Treatment of Eye Injuries In Sport

Most sports-related injuries can be prevented by wearing appropriate eye protection. When they occur they are usually the result of:

- a foreign substance entering the eye
- a direct blunt or sharp injury to the eye
- a direct blow to the face

FIRST AID RULES FOR EYE INJURIES

- **do not assume any eye injury is harmless** (even serious eye injuries can be relatively pain-free and have little impact on vision) – when in doubt, seek medical attention immediately
- **do not** rub or put pressure on the eye
- **do not** try to remove an object that is stuck into the eye or attempt to wash it out
- if a chemical has gone into the eye then **it must be washed out** as soon as possible. An eyewash station is ideal but any clean water will do. Take note of the name of the chemical to inform emergency staff
- **do not** try to remove contact lenses

TRANSPORT FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION

if the following signs or symptoms are present:

- visible bulging, scratch, or penetration of the eye
- if the parts of the eye or face don't look the same shape or size as the other eye
- bleeding (inside the eye or from the eye or eyelid)
- if the injured eye can't move same as the other eye
- chemical irritant in the eye
- blurred vision or loss of vision that doesn't clear with blinking
- double vision
- seeing flashing lights or "floaters" in the vision
- pain in or around the eye

Foreign Body in the Eye

- **wash your hands** thoroughly & **wear gloves** if there is blood
- ask the patient to open their eyes as much as possible and look to see if you can see a foreign body on the eye or under the eyelids
- blinking may bring a foreign body that is under an eyelid into view
- exposing the underside of the lower eyelid lid is easy: gently pull the lower lid downwards and ask the patient to look up
- you can look under the upper lid by grasping the eyelashes of the upper lid and gently pulling them away from the eye whilst the patient looks down
- **do not** attempt to remove an object that is embedded in the eye or eyelid
- you can try to irrigate a superficial foreign body out of an eye with clean water or saline:
 1. lie the person down and tilt their head to the side with the affected eye down
 2. gently pull the lids apart, encouraging the person to keep their eyes open as much as possible
 3. gently pour a stream of water or sterile saline solution across the eye (avoid using hot or cold fluid as this will be more uncomfortable - room temperature or body temperature is more comfortable)
 4. continue to flush for up to 15 minutes, or until the 'foreign body' has been flushed out
 5. if the foreign body cannot be removed, transport to a medical facility
- a foreign body sitting on the underside of the eyelids or on the white of the eye can often be removed using a tissue: roll one corner of a soft clean tissue with your fingers to a fine point and use that to gently try to remove it (do not try doing this with anything hard like tweezers)

Chemical Injuries

- flush the eye **immediately** (the sooner the better) as described above and continue to flush for at least 15 minutes on scene
- continue to flush while transporting the patient to a medical facility
- Take the chemical with you to the hospital so the staff know what it is

Blow to the Eye

- Gently hold a cold compress over the injured area
- you can use snow or crushed ice wrapped in a wet cloth (never put snow or ice directly on the skin as it can burn the skin)
- **do not** apply pressure
- if any of the signs or symptoms that are described on the opposite side of this card are present then transport to a medical facility



Most sports-related eye injuries are preventable with the use of appropriate eye protection!!!



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