

Corneal Abrasion / Corneal Foreign Body

Patient information sheet

A corneal abrasion is a scratch on the surface of the clear part of the eye. It is caused by accidental injury or after having a foreign body in the eye, such as metal or wood.

Symptoms of a corneal abrasion/ corneal foreign body can include:

- Tearing (watery eyes)
- Blurred vision
- Feels like something is in your eye or under your eyelid
- Redness to the eye
- Sensitivity to light
- Eye pain – more likely to occur after a foreign body has been removed.

Your treatment plan:

Eye medication:

- Antibiotic drops or ointment - 1 drop or 1cm line of ointment into the affected eye 4 times a day until your symptoms have fully resolved. Do not use for more than 4 days. This will be provided to you before discharge

Additional eye care:

- Do not rub your eye
- Use preservative free eye lubricants as required for relief of eye irritation. These can be purchased without prescription from your local pharmacy. Do not use lubricants for 30 minutes after using the antibiotic drops/ointment.

- Oral paracetamol or ibuprofen for eye pain (especially after foreign body removal)
- Avoid eye fatigue/strain – wear sunglasses outdoors and limit use of screen time e.g. phones, computers and TV
- Do not wear contact lenses until the eye has fully healed
- Do not pad or shield the eye. You may close your eye for comfort but do not cover your eye with any cotton pads or tissues as this can accidentally damage the eye surface.

When to return to ED for review:

Most corneal abrasion heal within 3-4 days. If a foreign body has been removed, discomfort may not improve for the first 24 hours.

Unless advised otherwise, you only need to return to the Emergency Department if:

- There is severe eye pain/discomfort
- You experience worsening changes in vision
- Or if symptoms have not completely resolved in 5 days.

For more information

Emergency Department

Flinders Medical Centre

Flinders Drive, Bedford Park SA Telephone: (08) 8204 6065

www.flinders.sa.gov.au

Noarlunga Hospital Alexander Kelly Drive Telephone: (08) 8384 9288

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHN



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