

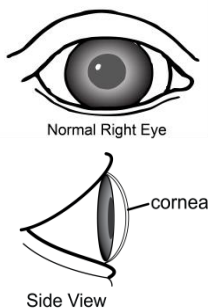
Emergency Services

Corneal Abrasion

Corneal abrasion (sounds like kor-nee-al ah-bray-shun) is a common eye injury. The cornea is the clear covering of the front part of the eye. A scratch, a poke, or other minor injury to the cornea is called an abrasion. Common objects that cause this injury include tree branches or twigs, fingernails, mascara brushes, contact lenses, and paper edges.

You know you might have a corneal abrasion when you notice eye pain, a feeling of something in the eye or under the lid, a watery eye, and sensitivity to light.

Small corneal abrasions usually heal within 1 to 2 days. Deeper or larger abrasions can take about a week to heal.



How to care for yourself at home

- Rest your eyes for the next 24 hours. Try not to read or watch TV. Keep lights low.
- If we gave you eye drops or ointment, insert as directed.
- **If we patched your eye**, keep the patch in place for the next 24 hours, unless directed differently. Keeping your eye closed with a patch can help ease the pain.

Do not loosen the patch unless you are having a lot of eye pain.

To insert eye drops or ointment:

- Lift the patch off from the bottom tape.
- Insert the drops or ointment as directed.
- Reapply the patch.
- Add more tape if needed.

You cannot drive while your eye is patched. Using only one eye, you will not be able to judge distances correctly.

- If your injury was caused by a contact lens, do not wear your contacts for at least 7 days, even if your eye feels better.
- If your eye is sore or you have a mild headache, take pain medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol or store brand) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, or store brand).

When to get help

See your family doctor or go to a walk-in clinic if you notice any of the following:

- Your eye pain gets worse or does not get better with pain medicine.
- Your eyesight gets worse.
- You get a fever over 38.5°C (101.3°F)

To learn more, it's good to ask

- Your family doctor
- HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf and hard of hearing) or go online at www.HealthLinkBC.ca

Adapted from 'FH.700.Ey43 Corneal Abrasion' (March 2012) with permission from Vancouver Coastal Health.