



First aid fact sheet

Eye injuries

Warnings and cautions

- Act with extreme urgency (within seconds) if it is a heat or chemical burn.
- Do not try to remove any object that is embedded in or penetrating from the eye.
- If the injury is severe do not persist in examining the eye.
- Be careful not to apply pressure to the eyeball because this may cause permanent damage.
- Inspection of the eye may be difficult because of spasm, swelling or twitching; mucus and blood discharge; or injuries to the eyelid or face.
- Warn the injured person of the importance of NOT rubbing their eyes, even if the desire to do so is very strong. Rubbing may damage the cornea or other parts of the eye.

Contact lenses

- If the injured person wears contact lenses that can be removed easily, ask them to remove the lenses before you deal with the eye injury.
- DO NOT remove the contact lenses yourself.
- DO NOT remove a contact lens if the surface of the eye is badly injured.

General signs and symptoms

- pain
- redness
- watering
- sensitivity to light
- swollen or spasming eyelids
- bleeding
- inability to open the eye
- injuries around the eye

What to do

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Wash your hands thoroughly and put disposable gloves on.
- 3 Place a light dressing over the injured eye – make sure there is no pressure on the eye.
- 4 Lie the patient in a comfortable position on their back.
- 5 Ask the patient to try not to move their eyes.
- 6 Seek medical aid.

See also – First Aid Fact Sheet for smoke and embers in yours eyes

In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)

DRSABCD Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

You could save a life with first aid training • www.stjohn.org.au • **1 300 360 455**

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