

Iritis

This Eye Casualty advice sheet explains what iritis is and how it is managed. If you have any queries, please speak to your doctor or nurse.

What is iritis?

Iritis is an inflammation of the iris – the coloured part of your eye. It often occurs for unknown reasons, but it may be linked to certain diseases affecting the body (e.g. infections), previous eye surgery or injury.

Doctors may use the term 'uveitis', because the inflammation sometimes involves other parts of the eye as well as the iris.

Signs and symptoms of iritis

- Redness
- Sensitivity to light
- Small or irregular pupil (dark circle in the middle of the eye)
- Watering
- Pain that may range from an aching soreness to intense discomfort.

How do we test for iritis?

The doctor will ask you about your general health. Blood tests and/or X-rays may also be taken. Ask your doctor when the results are available.

What is the treatment for iritis?

To prevent complications in the eye you may be given:

- **Steroid drops** – these reduce the inflammation. They act locally on the eye itself and do not cause complications in the rest of the body. The drops may be given frequently at first but then your doctor may advise you to gradually reduce the amount. Please do not stop the drops until your doctor tells you to do so.
- **Steroid ointment** – this may be used at night before you go to sleep.
- **Dilating drops** – these drops help to relieve your pain and prevent complications. As they enlarge your pupil, you will have blurred vision that can last for several days until you have stopped them, so it is a good idea not to drive or do any close work during this time.

- **Other drops** – sometimes you may be prescribed further drops, e.g. if there is a rise in the pressure in your eye. These are usually given twice a day.
- **Tablets** – occasionally, you may be given tablets if you still have high pressure in the eye.

Will this cure my iritis for good?

Iritis is a common condition that may come back again. You may have another attack within months or perhaps not for several years.

Aftercare advice

While you are having an attack, you will usually attend the Eye Clinic regularly for check-ups. Once you have been discharged from the clinic, please attend the Eye Casualty at the earliest sign of symptoms of another attack – redness, pain and watering of the eye. If you attend Eye Casualty with an attack, please remember to tell them that you have been treated for iritis previously.

Contacting us

If you have a minor eye problem, please seek advice from your GP, optician or pharmacist. If urgent, please attend Eye Casualty or call 111.

Eye Casualty (Reading):	Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm; Sat & Sun & bank holidays 9am-12.30pm; Closed Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.
Eye Casualty: Prince Charles Eye Unit (Windsor):	Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm; Sat 9am-12.30pm; Closed Sun & bank holidays.
Dorrell Ward (Reading):	0118 322 7172 (24 hours a day)
Eye Day Unit (Reading):	0118 322 7123 (Mon-Fri 7am to 6pm)

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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