



Subconjunctival haemorrhage

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

What is subconjunctival haemorrhage?

A subconjunctival haemorrhage is a tiny bleed from one of the small blood vessels on the surface of the eye (similar to a bruise). It can be caused by high blood pressure or by straining when you cough or sneeze. Sometimes it can just happen suddenly, without any obvious known cause.

Signs and symptoms

A subconjunctival haemorrhage may cause your eye to look very red. This may seem alarming, and it may appear worse before it gets better. However, it shouldn't be painful and it shouldn't affect your vision. Your eye may feel slightly different to normal and you may notice a gritty feeling.

What is the treatment?

A subconjunctival haemorrhage will heal on its own. It can usually take two to three weeks to settle. During this time, you might notice a slight yellow tinge to the white of your eye.

If your eye feels gritty, your local pharmacist (chemist) can give you lubricating eye drops (such as hypromellose drops or viscotears gel) to soothe the eye.

For a subconjunctival haemorrhage, you do not need to see your GP or optician. You should ask your GP practice nurse to check your blood pressure just in case this is an underlying cause.

If you bruise or bleed easily on other parts of your body, especially if you are taking aspirin or warfarin tablets, your GP may organise further tests.

If you notice that your vision is reduced, please attend Eye Casualty.

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 8.30am to 5pm; Sat & Sun & bank holidays 8.30am-12.30pm; Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.
Eye Casualty: Prince Charles Eye Unit (Windsor):	Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5pm; Sat 8.30am-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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