



Eye Scratches

Patient and Family Education

What is an eye scratch?

The cornea is a thin clear layer of tissue that covers the iris (colored part of the eye) and pupil of the eye. Scratches and injuries to the cornea happen when an object hits the eye or gets under the eyelid and is rubbed. Contact lens can also cause eye scratches.

What are the possible symptoms?

Your child may have one or more of the following symptoms:

- Eye pain
- A feeling that something is in the eye
- Refuses to open the eye
- Tears or redness
- Discomfort in bright light
- Blurred vision

How are eye scratches treated?

Your child's doctor will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general guidelines to follow include:

- If there is something such as dirt or sand in the eye, it may need to be washed out.
- Your child's doctor will check the eye carefully using a special light and usually some eye drops.
- Antibiotic ointment to use in the eye at home.
- Medicines to take by mouth for infection or pain.
- Make sure your child gets enough rest. Have your child play quietly and avoid sports and rough play until the eye feels better.
- A recheck of the eye in 24-48 hours may be advised.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your child's doctor **right away** if your child has:

- Pus-like drainage coming from the eye.

Also call your child's doctor if your child has:

- Pain that does not get better in 24 hours.
- Eye redness that does not clear or go away.
- Symptoms that return after treatment is stopped.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404-250-KIDS.