

RED EYE

Written by U.S Immigration News

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Many people go to the doctor with complaints of red eye. Red eye requires immediate medical attention so as to differentiate them from issues that threaten vision. Red eye could also be a manifestation of a disease affecting the whole body.

What are the things to look out for if you have red eye?

Presence of a discharge:

Watery discharge is common with allergic problem, it can also occur with virus infection. Color or pus like discharge may indicate bacterial infection that needs further evaluation.

Pain

Red eye accompanied with pain may be associated with increased pressure in the eye. Infection can also cause pain.

Change in the vision

If there is change in vision such as blurry vision or decreased vision that is new, it should be evaluated.

Sensitivity to light (photophobia)

When there is increased discomfort when the eye is opened to light, that makes you feel like avoiding bright light.

Persistent feeling of "something in the eye"

A feeling like a foreign object present that makes it hard to open the eye without difficulty. This is different from sensation of sand in the eye that tends to occur with allergy.

People who use contact lens

They can have injury to the eye with subsequent infection.

History of injury

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Any form of recent injury to the eye with subsequent redness needs further evaluation.

Some Causes of Red eye:

Note: The clear membrane that covers the white part of the eye and lines the inner part of the eyelids is called the conjunctiva .

Conjunctivitis: Inflammation or infection of the conjunctiva. This could be a result of allergy, viral or bacterial infection. Infective conjunctivitis is contagious. Presentation includes:

- Feeling of "something in the eye"
- Discharge and increased tearing
- Maybe sensitive to light
- Vision may also feel blurred
- Treatment varies depending on the cause: antihistamines for the allergic, symptomatic relief for viral, and antibiotics for bacterial.

Subconjunctiva hemorrhage (*Bleeding into the conjunctiva*): When the blood vessels under the conjunctiva bleed, it causes painless bright redness of the eye. This is commonly referred to as having a blood shot eye. It is usually noticed by someone else or when you look in the mirror.

- It can occur without any reason, but things that cause increased pressure (such as vomiting, sneezing, and coughing) make people prone to subconjunctiva hemorrhage.
- If you have high blood pressure, check to make sure it is well controlled.
- No definite treatment required. Artificial tears or eye drops can be used to relieve the itching.
- Resolves on its own within one to two weeks.

Keratitis: *Inflammation or infection of the cornea.*

It can be caused by viral (herpes simplex or varicella zoster) and bacterial infection. Keratitis can be part of generalized disease such as rheumatoid disease or other rheumatologic disease. People who wear contact lens are prone to keratitis because of possible injury to the cornea with the introduction of bacteria. Presentation include

- Feeling of something foreign that cannot be gotten rid off in the eye.

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- Sensitivity to light
- Blurry vision
- Treatment is antibiotics for bacterial causes and antiviral for that caused by herpes and shingles.

Acute Angle closure Glaucoma: (*Sudden rise in pressure in the eye*). There is

- Severe eye pain
- Headache
- Significant discomfort with or without vomiting
- Urgent medical attention required to prevent loss of vision in the eye.

Take Home Message

While the cause of red eye may be simple, not every cause can be managed without consulting the doctor. If you have one of the associated symptoms described above please seek medical advice. It is better to be overprotective of your eye than to loose your vision.

Dr. Oluwatoyosi Dairo can be contacted at **Amazing Medical Services P.C. at 110-16 Sutphin Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11435 or by phone at (718) 526-7600.**

This article is for educational purposes and it is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor.