

## How to Care for Your Child with a Foreign Body in the Eye

This leaflet will provide you with information about foreign body in the eye causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and home care advice.



### What is foreign body in the eye?

It is an object in your eye that should not be there, for example, a wood chip, a speck of dust, an insect or a piece of glass.

### What are the causes of foreign body in the eye?

- Dirt
- Sand
- Dust (enter the eye because of wind)
- Glass (can enter the eye after an accident involving broken glass)

### What are the symptoms of foreign body in the eye?

- Your child's eye can become:
  - o watery and red
  - o painful
  - o sensitive to light
- these symptoms cause irritation leading to frequent rubbing and blinking
- Your child may feel like there's a foreign body in the eye

## How is foreign body in the eye diagnosed?

- The doctor will examine your child's eye and may use:
  - o Local anesthetic eye drops.
  - o A special light to look at the eye in details
  - o A special dye called "fluorescein" to check if there is an abrasion in your child's eye.
- After conducting this examination, the doctor will advise you about the care of your child's eye and the subsequent management plan.

## How is foreign body in the eye treated?

- If the foreign body is identified, then the doctor will try to remove the foreign body by using a small cotton applicator, or by washing your child's eye with sterile water for irrigation.
- If the doctor cannot remove the foreign body in the emergency department or if your child has a large corneal abrasion (superficial scratch on the cornea), then the doctor will arrange for a review by an eye specialist called an "ophthalmologist"

## Home care advice:

- If the foreign body in the eye is visible, try tapping it with a damp cotton swab.
- Try to flush out the foreign body by flowing water on the eye as you hold the eyelid open
- After removal of the foreign body you would expect the symptoms to improve with 48 -72 hours
- If your child wear contact lenses please avoid these until the eye is healed
- If your doctor advises to give medicine, you can give
  - o Paracetamol (any brand) or Ibuprofen (any brand)
  - o Follow the instruction on the medicine package for the correct dose for your child
  - o Do not give your child Aspirin as this can cause serious complications

## Seek medical advice if your child:

- If the symptoms continue for 72 hours or more

## Go to the emergency department

- If your child develops discharge from his/her eye
- If symptoms are getting worse

used as a substitute for the medical care and the advice of your doctor. Ask your healthcare provider about this information if you have questions. You can find us on [www.sidra.org](http://www.sidra.org)