

Handling an Eye Emergency

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Degrees of Emergency

- ◆ Not every emergency is equal, if you are in any doubt, always ask the optometrist in your practice.
- ◆ As a guide:

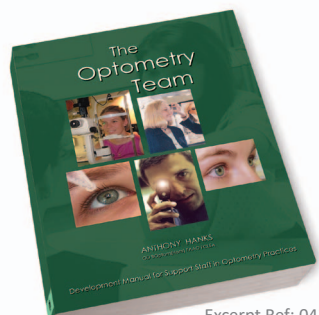
HANDLING AN EYE EMERGENCY

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|---|---|-----------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● REAL EMERGENCY | <p><i>Seen at once ("Stat")</i></p> | <p>Minutes</p> |
| <p>eg: - Sudden vision loss</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- "Curtain" over vision</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Sudden double vision with headache</p> | <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Chemical burn to the eye</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Trauma to the eye</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● URGENT | <p><i>Seen within 24 hours</i></p> | <p>Hours</p> |
| <p>eg: - Sudden onset of flashes</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Severe lid swelling</p> | <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Sudden onset of floaters</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Red eye without pain</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LESS URGENT | <p><i>Seen within days</i></p> | <p>Days</p> |
| <p>eg: - Gradual vision loss</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Longer term double vision</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Transient vision loss (comes & goes)</p> | <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Headaches</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">- Mild red eye</p> | |



Eye Accidents

- ◆ 75% of all eye accidents are industrial, 90% of the patients are male.
- ◆ Examples:
 - Corneal laceration
 - Foreign body lodged in the eye
 - Blood in the eye (hyphema)
 - Blow-out fractures of the bones around the eye
 - Damaged or ruptured eyeball
 - Lid laceration
 - Retinal detachment following a blow
 - Chemical burns



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This is an excerpt from *The Optometry Team*, written by optometrist Dr Tony Hanks - now in its' 4th edition.

The book is available on-line from www.hanksresources.com