MetLife | Return to Health

Acute Eye Disorders



Acute Eye Disorders:

Corneal abrasion[1]

Corneal abrasion is a superficial scratch on the clear, protective "window" at the front of the eye (cornea). Corneal abrasions should be treated to prevent infection and development of an ulcer on the cornea.

Symptoms may include:

- pain, blurry vision, a gritty feeling in the eye, tearing, redness and sensitivity to light

Treatment:

- antibiotic drops or ointment

Conjunctivitis (pink eye)[4]

An inflammation or infection of the clear membrane (conjunctiva) that lines the eyelid and covers the white part of the eye. Commonly caused by a viral or bacterial infection and is contagious.

Symptoms may include:

- include redness, itchiness, tearing and a discharge that forms a crust overnight that can make opening the eyes difficult in the morning. Can affect one or both eyes.

Treatment:

- use of artificial tears,
- cleansing eye lids with a wet cloth,
- use of cold or hot compresses and antibiotics

Corneal Ulcer[2]

Corneal ulcer is an open sore on your cornea, the layer that covers the front of the eye. Causes can include untreated corneal abrasions, contact lens use, dry eyes, injury or burn on the cornea. Can cause permanent damage leading to blindness if not treated.

Symptoms may include:

- eye pain, eye drainage, light sensitivity, swelling of the eyelids and a foreign body sensation

Treatment:

- can include antibiotic, antifungal or antiviral medications used directly to the eye in the form of drops or systemically in the form of oral medications.
- Steroid drops may be given to reduce inflammation and swelling

Corneal Transplant[3]

- Surgery to replace a damaged cornea using donated healthy corneal tissue. Damage to the cornea can be caused by corneal ulcers, keratoconus (change in shape of cornea) or damage due to injuries.

Stye[5]

Red, painful lump near the edge of the eyelid that may look like a boil or a pimple.

Symptoms may include:

- eyelid pain,
- eyelid swelling, tearing

Treatment:

- consists of self-care measures first, such as applying a warm washcloth to the closed eyelid for five to 10 minutes several times a day and gently massaging the eyelid. It is recommended to contact a physician if it persists more than 48 hours.

Retinal detachment[6]

A condition where the retina (a thin layer of tissue) pulls apart away from its normal position. This prevents the retina from receiving adequate nourishment and oxygen. This is an emergent situation.

Symptoms may include:

- reduced vision,
- the sudden appearance of floaters or flashing lights, loss of peripheral vision or a curtain like shadow over vision. These are often warning signs before the detachment has occurred. The retinal detachment itself is painless.

Treatment:

- includes emergent evaluation, surgery is almost always indicated. Seeking medical attention quickly can help to prevent vision loss.

Potential Accommodations Can Include the Following:

Corneal abrasions/ulcers[2,7]

- Ability to take frequent, short breaks to apply topical antibiotic ointments or lubricating drops throughout a shift
- Temporary reassignment to tasks not requiring visual acuity
- Ability to wear sunglasses or work in less bright work area
- Anti-glare screens

Conjunctivitis[9]

- Ability to take short breaks to apply cool compresses and/or eye drops
- Temporary time off or remote work to prevent the spread of a viral or bacterial infection pending initiation of treatment

Corneal transplant[8]

- protective glasses or eyewear
- temporary job reassignment to avoid physical exertion during recovery period

Stye[10]

- Periodic 15-minute breaks to apply warm compresses and antibiotic ointment

Retinal detachment[11]

- Post-surgery light sensitivity may benefit from light filters
- Tinted lenses
- Special window treatments
- Workstation relocation to reduce eye pain
- Dark glasses for those working outdoors
- Frequent breaks to rest the eyes

References

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4. Pink eye (conjunctivitis) (2023, Jan 25). Accessed 6/20/2023. Retrieved from Mayo Clinic: Corneal Ulcer: Symptoms, Causes & Treatment (clevelandclinic.org)
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7. Corneal Abrasion (n.d.). Accessed 6/20/2023. Retrieved from MDGuidelines: Corneal Abrasion - Health Advisor - MDGuidelines
8. Corneal Transplant (n.d.). Accessed 6/20/2023. Retrieved from MDGuidelines: Corneal Transplant - Health Advisor - MDGuidelines
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11. Retinal detachment (n.d.). Accessed 6/20/2023. Retrieved from MDGuidelines: Retinal Detachment - Health Advisor - MDGuidelines

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