

Eye Foreign Body

Definition

- A foreign body (FB) or object becomes stuck in the eye

Health Information

Symptoms

- Discomfort and pain
- Constant tears and blinking
- Eye becomes irritated and pink

Causes

- Most common objects that get in the eye: eyelashes or dried mucus (sleep)
- Small particles (such as sand, dirt, sawdust) can also be blown into the eyes.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- The foreign body (FB) will always stay in the front part of the eye.
- Some parents worry that the foreign body can get lost behind the eyeball.
- This will not happen. The space beyond the eyelids goes back $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) and then stops. In other words, it's a dead end.
- You can get most FB out of the eye at home.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Treatment For Lots of Particles (such as dirt or sand):

- Clean around the eye and face with a wet washcloth first. Reason: So more particles won't get in.
- Put that side of the face in a pan of warm water. Have your child try to open and close the eye while in the water. Do it several times.
- For younger children, fill a glass or pitcher with warm tap water. Pour the water into the eye while holding your child face up. The eyelids must be held open during the rinsing. This process often needs the help of another person.

3. Treatment for a Particle in a Corner of the Eye:

- Try to get it out.
- Use a moistened cotton swab or the corner of a moistened cloth.

4. Treatment for a Particle Under the Lower Lid:

- Pull the lower lid out by pulling down on the skin above the cheekbone.
- Touch the particle with a moistened cotton swab.
- If that doesn't work, try pouring water on the particle. Do this while holding the lid out.

5. Treatment for a Particle Under the Upper Lid:

- If the particle can't be seen, it's probably under the upper lid. This is the most common hiding place.
- Put that side of the face in a pan of warm water. Have your child try to open and close the eye while in the water. Do it several times. If you have an eye cup, use it.
- If this fails, pull the upper lid out. Then, draw it over the lower lid while the eye is closed. When the eye is opened, the particle may come out. The lower lid may sweep the particle out from under the upper lid.

6. Contact Lenses:

- Children who wear contact lenses need to switch to glasses for a while.
- Reason: To prevent damage to the cornea.

7. What to Expect:

- The pain, redness and tearing usually pass after the foreign body is removed.
- It may take 1 to 2 hours for these symptoms to fully go away.

Call Your Doctor If

- You can't get the FB out
- Feels like FB is still there 2 hours after taken out
- Tearing and blinking do not stop after you take out the FB
- Vision is not normal after the eye has been washed out
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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