

What is a corneal abrasion?

A corneal abrasion is a scratch on the surface of the clear part of the eye (cornea). It is most commonly due to trauma/injury.

What are the symptoms of a corneal abrasion?

- Pain which can be severe
- Foreign body sensation
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Tearing (watering eyes)
- Redness

What is the treatment of a corneal abrasion?

Eye medication:

- Antibiotic drops or ointment used 3-4 times a day to prevent infection
- Dilating drops to decrease pain if you have a large corneal abrasion (this relieves spasm of the internal eye muscles. Please note that it will blur vision-particularly with reading. This effect may last for a few days after drop has been ceased.)

Additional pain relief:

- Oral paracetamol, paracetamol and codeine
- Ice packs (place over injured eye: eyelids closed, ice pack covered in soft cloth)
- Sunglasses out of doors

While an anaesthetic eye drop relieves immediate pain and allows the doctor to examine your eye, these drops cannot be used at home since they interfere with the natural healing of the cornea.

What are the possible complications of a corneal abrasion?

- Infection
- Blurred vision from scarring
- Recurrent erosion syndrome: recurrent irritation from a poorly healed abrasion is most common after trauma from a sharp object such as a fingernail or paper.



Things to remember:

- Most corneal abrasions heal within 3-4 days with pain improving each day until it has healed completely
- Do not rub your eye after the injury
- Do not touch your eye with cotton buds or tweezers
- Do not wear contact lenses until the eye has healed fully
- Seek medical attention if there is persistent or worsening discomfort, redness or decreased vision.

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