

# Sub-conjunctival haemorrhage

## - bleeding in your eye

This information sheet has been given to you to help answer some of the questions you may have about sub-conjunctival haemorrhage. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

### What is a sub-conjunctival haemorrhage?

The conjunctiva is a clear membrane covering the white of the eye (sclera) and the inside of the eyelids. A sub-conjunctival haemorrhage is bleeding from the tiny blood vessels under the conjunctiva.

### What causes a sub-conjunctival haemorrhage?

The most common causes are:

- coughing, sneezing, straining and nose blowing
- a direct injury to your eye
- high blood pressure.

### What are the signs and symptoms?

You will usually notice a small, red spot of blood on the white of your eye. This usually happens suddenly and is not painful. It will not affect your eyesight.

### How is it diagnosed?

The ophthalmologist (specialist eye doctor) or nurse practitioner will examine your eye thoroughly using a microscope. They may also put some eye drops into your eye to dilate (enlarge) your pupil. This allows the doctor or nurse to see the back of your eye. The eye drops will blur your vision temporarily for around two to three hours. **You must not drive if this affects your vision.** We may also check your blood pressure and test for diabetes.

### What treatments are available?

Although the condition looks frightening it is never serious. Treatment is not necessary and the haemorrhage will clear up on its own. It is similar to a bruise and the blood should be re-absorbed by your body within one to two weeks. You can carry on with your usual activities while the haemorrhage is healing. However, you should tell the doctor/nurse if you:

- think you may have injured your eye, for example if something could have got into your eye, like a small piece of metal
- have noticed any other unexplained bleeding or bruising elsewhere on your body;
- have not had your blood pressure checked recently
- have a blood condition such as lymphoma or leukaemia or are on chemotherapy for cancer.

## What should I do if the symptoms get worse?

This is very uncommon. If your symptoms get worse or the haemorrhage does not clear up within two weeks, please call the nurse practitioner in eye casualty on 020 7188 4336 between 9am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. The Eye Rapid Access Service is open from 8.30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

If you are worried about your symptoms outside of office hours, go to the main Accident and Emergency Department at St Thomas' Hospital where there is an eye doctor on-call for urgent problems.

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** – To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or: **t:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC)** – For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.  
**t:** 020 7188 3416

**Language support services** – If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.  
**t:** 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

**NHS Direct** - Offers health information and advice from specially trained nurses over the phone 24 hours a day.  
**t:** 0845 4647 **w:** [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

**NHS Choices** – Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.  
**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### **Become a member of your local hospitals, and help shape our future**

Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years.

To join, please call 0848 143 4017, email [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk) or visit [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)