



Traumatic Hyphema

Hyphema is the presence of blood in the front part of the eye. The condition is usually due to blunt trauma of the eye, in which case, it is called traumatic hyphema. Traumatic hyphema often occurs when the eye is struck by a ball, hockey puck, projectile toy, rock, BB gun pellet, bungee cord, paint ball, or a fist. The condition is very noticeable, as you can see blood behind the cornea. The blood may cover all or part of the iris, the colored part of your eye.

If your eye has been struck by an object or if you see blood in the eye, you should have a complete eye exam by an ophthalmologist (Eye M.D.) to rule out a more severe eye injury. Most patients receive treatment for traumatic hyphema on an outpatient basis. Your ophthalmologist will probably prescribe eyedrops to maintain dilation of the pupil, control inflammation, and reduce eye pressure if it is elevated. Your ophthalmologist may want to see you every day or two until your condition improves.

You must avoid doing any strenuous activity and taking aspirin; these may cause more bleeding, which could cause more severe damage and vision problems.

If you have had traumatic hyphema, you should see your ophthalmologist every year, because this injury increases your risk for angle-recession glaucoma, and early detection is critical to prevent vision loss.

It is important that you wear protective eyewear when engaging in activities that can be hazardous to your eyes, whether you are at work, doing chores around the house or yard, or playing sports.