

HEALTHEAST MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION  
MEDICAL OPERATIONS MANUAL

**4C EYE INJURIES**

**PATIENT CARE GOALS**

- Identify and treat potential life threats, maintain adequate airway, ventilation, oxygenation, and perfusion.
- Provide rapid and effective immobilization of any object impaled in the eye.
- Manage injury-related anxiety and pain as measured using the patient's perception of changes in pain level.

**EMT**

1. Assess the patient and provide initial care per **A.2 General Assessment and Care**.
2. Treat specific eye injuries as follows:

**For penetrating trauma**

- a. Observe for bleeding and leakage of iris material or clear fluid.
- b. Do not palpate or apply direct pressure to the eye.
- c. Stabilize impaled object in place. Do not remove the object.
- d. Shield injured eye.
- e. Cover uninjured eye with gauze.<sup>1</sup>
- f. Avoid unnecessary movement. Advise the patient not to cough, sneeze, or move more than necessary.

**For chemical burn**

- a. Flush the eye with normal saline for 20 minutes. If chemical burns involve a strong alkali, continuously flush throughout transport. Remove contact lenses.
- b. Notify the receiving hospital of the chemical involved.

**For a dislodged eye**

- a. Cover with eye shield.

**For ultraviolet light exposure** (e.g., arc welder, sun lamp)

- a. Place cool compress lightly over both eye lids
- b. Symptoms may be delayed by 30 minutes to 10 hours.

**For sudden loss of vision**

- a. Examine both eyes to ensure each one is intact.
  - Assess for hemorrhage, laceration, contusion, or leaking fluid.
  - Assess visual acuity (ability to see light changes, hand motion, count fingers).
  - Assess for visible foreign bodies in the eye.
  - Assess for ability to move both eyes together.

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- b. Flush eye with normal saline to remove small foreign bodies.
- c. Lightly bandage both eyes if necessary.

**PARAMEDIC**

3. Treat any injury related pain or anxiety as per **1C Pain and Nausea Management** and **1D Anxiety and Sedation Management**.

**DOCUMENTATION KEY POINTS**

- Procedures performed to stabilize any impaled object.
- Name of chemical involved in chemical burns.
- Initial and ongoing assessments, monitoring, interventions, patient response, and complications (if any) encountered.

**NOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> Movement of the uninjured eye will cause movement of the injured eye which could worsen the damage from the impaled object. Covering the eye will assist the patient in keeping their eyes from moving.