

Sub-Conjunctival Hemorrhage

The conjunctiva is the thin, transparent, outer-most layer of the eye. The conjunctival tissue begins at the outer edge of the cornea and covers the white of the eye and the inside of the eyelids. It is filled with tiny, almost invisible blood vessels.

Subconjunctival hemorrhage occurs when a small blood vessel under the conjunctiva ruptures and bleeds. While it looks frightening, as if your eye is filled with blood, a subconjunctival hemorrhage is essentially harmless. It is basically a bruise, with the blood trapped under the clear conjunctival tissue.

Symptoms

A subconjunctival hemorrhage appears as a red, bloody patch on the white of the eye. There should be no pain and no change in vision.

Causes

A subconjunctival hemorrhage may develop overnight with no overt cause, or it may happen after coughing, lifting a heavy object or vomiting. One may appear after eye surgery or trauma to the eye from an accident. Those with diabetes and hypertension are more prone to subconjunctival hemorrhage.

Treatment

Usually, you'll diagnose your subconjunctival hemorrhage when you look in the mirror or when someone notices it.

Although it looks like an emergency situation, a subconjunctival hemorrhage won't affect your vision and doesn't require treatment. The blood will naturally absorb into your body and disappear in two or so weeks, just like a bruise does.

However, if your vision changes while you have a subconjunctival hemorrhage, contact us immediately for an appointment. This could be a sign of a more serious vision problem.