

Idaho Falls Pediatrics

Eye Irritation

What is an eye irritation?

An irritant in the eye is a very common cause of red eyes. The irritant could be shampoo, smog, smoke, or chlorine from a swimming pool. Often young children's eyes are irritated by touching the eyes with hands carrying dirt, food, soap, or animal saliva.

How long does it last?

Eyes usually lose their redness within 4 hours after the irritating substance is washed out.

How can I take care of my child?

- **Wash with soap:** Wash the face and then wash the eyelids once with soap and water. Rinse them carefully with water. This will remove any irritants from the skin.
- **Rinse out with water:** Rinse out the eye with warm water for 5 minutes.
- **Eyedrops:** Red eyes from irritants usually feel much better after the irritant has been washed out. If the eyes are still uncomfortable and bloodshot, put in some artificial tears or long-acting vasoconstrictor eyedrops (nonprescription items).

When should I call Idaho Falls Pediatrics?

Call during office hours if:

- Your child has a yellow discharge coming from the eye.
- The redness lasts more than 2 days
- You have other questions or concerns.

*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.