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.