



Information for Patients and Carers

Periorbital Cellulitis

Periorbital Cellulitis is an infection in the skin around your child's eye socket (orbit). It usually only happens on one side. It can happen after a small cut or graze, or after a recent cold, cough or sinus infection.

What are the symptoms of periorbital cellulitis?

Your child may have:

- A swollen or puffy eyelid
- Redness and tenderness around the eye
- A fever
- Trouble fully opening the eye



How is periorbital cellulitis treated?

Most children get better at home with antibiotics.

Sometimes, if it is more serious, they may need to stay in hospital for antibiotics through a vein (intravenous). The good news is almost all children respond well to this and will make a full recovery

Things to do at home.

- Put cool, damp cloths gently on the eye to help it feel better
- Gently clean the area around the eye
- Try to stop your child from rubbing or scratching the eye
- Wash their hands often
- Give medicine like paracetamol or ibuprofen for pain or fever

It is not always possible to prevent periorbital cellulitis. However, keeping your child's vaccinations up to date is important as some of the bacteria known to cause this infection are covered by routine immunisations.

When should you worry?

Children can sometimes become more unwell suddenly, so it is very important that you stay with them and check on them regularly.

Seek medical advice urgently if your child develops any of the following:



RED

**You need
urgent
help.**

- Redness or swelling that keeps getting worse
- Severe headaches
- Pain when they move their eye
- Changes to their vision
- Bulging or sticking out of the eye
- Irregular breathing or difficulty breathing
- Changes to their behaviour such as being confused
- Worsening fever

**Please attend
your local
Emergency
Department
or
call 999**

Rarely, periorbital cellulitis can progress to orbital cellulitis. This is where the infection involves the deeper tissues around the eye and the eyeball itself. This is a serious infection and needs immediate care.

If in doubt, always seek medical advice.



To access more about this and to be able to read this in different languages, please visit our Paediatric Emergency Department webpage on <https://mft.nhs.uk/periorbital-cellulitis/>

