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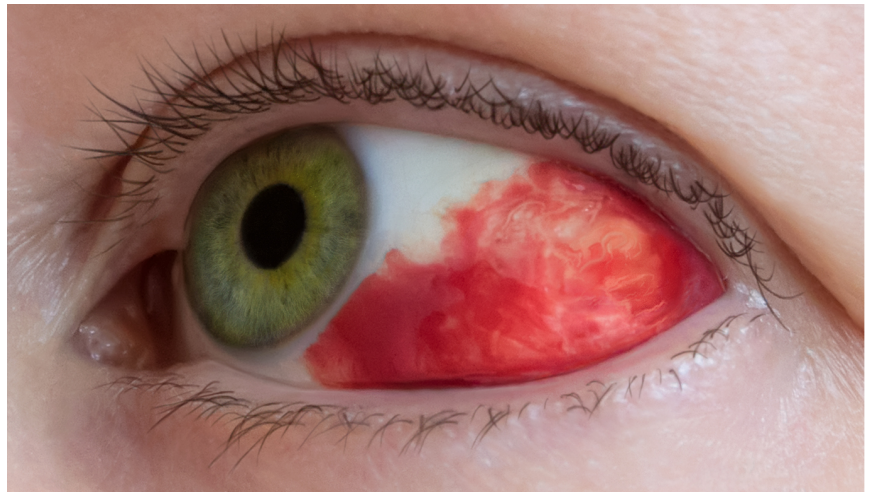
Subconjunctival Hemorrhage

Overview

A subconjunctival hemorrhage occurs when a blood vessel in the conjunctiva ruptures and bleeds. Patients are usually very concerned when they happen for the first time because their eye is “bleeding”. They often happen with vomiting, eye rubbing, trauma or straining. Fortunately, they are self-limiting and will resolve on their own. When they recur a health workup and laboratory testing are warranted.

Signs and Symptoms

The most apparent sign of a subconjunctival hemorrhage on the eye is a bright red spot over the white part of the eye (sclera). Other than that there are no other signs or symptoms experienced by patients.



Causes

Bleeding in a subconjunctival hemorrhage is caused by a ruptured blood vessel. The ruptured blood vessel is caused by excessive pressure or injury. Violent vomiting, coughing or straining increases pressure in a blood vessel and may cause it to burst. Trauma from an eye injury or surgery are also common causes. In some cases it may be caused by excessive hypertension or bleeding disorders. They are more common with hypertension, diabetes and atherosclerosis.

Testing & Evaluation

Spontaneous and non-recurring subconjunctival hemorrhages will simply be looked at by your eye doctor. With recurrent subconjunctival hemorrhages checking a patient’s blood pressure is warranted along with ordering lab work that tests clotting functions. When they happen with trauma a thorough dilated eye exam is necessary to rule out other potentially more serious conditions.

Treatment

The vast majority of subconjunctival hemorrhages are observed and allowed to resolve over a period of about two weeks. If systemic factors are involved they should be addressed with the patient's primary care doctor.

Websites

All About Vision: <https://www.allaboutvision.com/conditions/hemorrhage.htm>

American Optometric Association:

<https://www.aoa.org/healthy-eyes/eye-and-vision-conditions/subconjunctival-hemorrhage?sso=y>