

# Episcleritis

Episcleritis is a common condition affecting the episclera, the layer of tissue between the surface membrane (conjunctiva) and the firm white part of the eye (the sclera). In episcleritis, the episclera becomes inflamed and red. It often causes irritation, soreness or a gritty sensation. Episcleritis can be recurrent.

## What causes episcleritis?

The cause of episcleritis is mostly unknown. Very rarely, it may be due to an underlying inflammation in your body related to other health conditions; this can be investigated by blood tests if the episcleritis is severe and recurrent.

## What is the treatment?

In most cases, episcleritis recovers on its own in a few weeks and may not need any treatment, but the symptoms can be relieved by using artificial tear drops. If it persists and causes significant discomfort, you may need a short course of steroid drops or some non-steroidal anti-inflammatory tablets to help it clear.

## When to seek advice

If your eyesight becomes blurred or the pain is severe, you should call Moorfields Direct for advice on 020 7566 2345 or go to your local A&E department for a further examination. You could also go to Moorfields A&E department, open 24/7 (for emergency eye problems only).

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Revision number: 6  
Approval date: June 2023  
Review date: June 2026

## Useful contacts

**Moorfields A&E at City Road, 162  
City Road, London EC1V 2PD**

**Telephone switchboard:  
020 7253 3411**

This is a 24 hour service for eye emergencies only. Following triage, you may be seen on the day or informed that no treatment is needed at the service and advised to see your GP or optician. Alternatively, you may be booked into an urgent care clinic at City Road for a different day.

**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS  
Foundation Trust  
City Road, London EC1V 2PD  
Phone: 020 7253 3411  
[www.moorfields.nhs.uk](http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk)**



### **Moorfields Direct telephone helpline**

Phone: 020 7566 2345  
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm  
Saturday, 9am-5pm  
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

### **Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)**

Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325  
Email: [moorfields.pals@nhs.net](mailto:moorfields.pals@nhs.net)  
Opening hours: Monday to Friday, except bank holidays  
Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

### **Your right to treatment within 18 weeks**

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right. For more information about your rights and responsibilities, please visit the Moorfields website and search 'Referrals to treatment (RTT)'. To learn more about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit [www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs](http://www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs)

