
REFERRAL FOR “RED” EYE TO A SPECIALIST IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

There is a wide range of causes of “red” eye. 70% of the manifestations of this condition at primary health care may be due to:

- Bacterial/Viral/Allergic Conjunctivitis
- Episcleritis
- Subconjunctival haemorrhage

All the above can potentially be managed initially in primary care. It is important if a referral is indicated, to document the history and examination findings including negative findings of:

- Visual acuity.
- Pain.
- Photophobia.
- Unilateral/Bilateral.
- Localised/Generalised.
- Absence of corneal opacity.

Indications for referral include:

A. 1. EMERGENCY REFERRAL TO A SPECIALIST (within 0-1 day)

- Associated loss or risk to visual acuity
- Associated corneal opacity
- Contact lens wearers
- Physical/Chemical injury
- Orbital Cellulitis

2. EMERGENCY REFERRAL TO A SPECIALIST (within 10 days)

- Suspected iritis/acute glaucoma/scleritis

B. ROUTINE REFERRAL TO A SPECIALIST

- For suspected pterygium and pingueculum.
- Red eye resistant to initial treatment in primary care.
- Diagnosis uncertain with no visual loss.

Source:

https://www.imperial.nhs.uk/-/media/website/gps-and-referrers/gp-documents/gp-professional-development/ophthalmology-gp-study-afternoon-26-june-2019/red-eye-gp-talk-r-jain.pdf?rev=d3235d8900924b2089318907525cd32a&sc_lang=en