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Swollen Eye



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Allergic conjunctivitis with chemosis: This patient has allergic conjunctivitis with chemosis, which is a diffuse swelling of the bulbar and fornical conjunctiva. This sign can also be seen with chemical burns of the eye, traumatic retrobulbar hemorrhage, acute conjunctivitis, and allergic reactions. Treatment is based on eliminating the inciting agent and on the application of cool compresses and topical drops. In mild cases, the use of artificial tears (eg, Refresh) 4-8 times a day is sufficient. In moderate cases, the use of vasoconstrictor and antihistamine drops (eg, naphazoline with pheniramine) 4 times a day is indicated. In severe cases, the use of a topical steroid (eg, fluorometholone) 4 times a day for 1-2 weeks is recommended. Follow-up treatment should occur in 1-2 weeks, or earlier if topical steroids are prescribed. Reference: Rhee DJ, Pyfer MF, eds. *The Wills Eye Manual: Office and Emergency Room Diagnosis and Treatment of Eye Disease*. Wolters Kluwer Company; 1999.

BACKGROUND

The patient is an otherwise healthy man who complains of swelling and irritation of his left eye. He stated that he touched the soil in his garden to check the level of hydration and then rubbed his left eye. Within an hour, he experienced swelling and irritation. His uncorrected vision is 20/20 bilaterally. What is the diagnosis? How should it be managed?

Hint

This patient has a type of edema seen in the eye.

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