

Referral

Refer the patient **urgently** to a facility that has the following:

- An ophthalmic surgeon who is equipped for pars plana vitrectomy (required for posterior IOFB)
- Imaging facilities: orbital X-ray and ultrasound, and CT scan. MRI is contraindicated until you have excluded the possibility of a metallic IOFB
- An operating theatre where urgent removal of IOFB, intravitreal antibiotic injection and surgical repair can be done.

Gently explain to the patient that multiple operations may be required and that visual prognosis is uncertain, but taking up the referral as quickly as possible will give them the best chance. Send the patient with a comprehensive referral note and alert the surgeon.

Rehearsal

In preparation for handling such a patient, you need to ensure that your clinic has the following items:

- **Equipment.** Desmarre's eye retractor, rigid eye shield, tape, standard examination equipment
- **Drugs.** Analgesics, antibiotics, anti-emetics, tetanus vaccine
- **Information.** Contact details of the nearest referral centre that can provide vitrectomy surgery.

Practise the following:

- Taking consent (and assent from children)
- Speaking with the patient about the visual prognosis
- Writing a referral note.

References

- 1 Parke DW, Flynn HW, Fisher YL. Management of intraocular foreign bodies: a clinical flight plan. *Can J Ophthalmol* 2013;48:8-12.
- 2 Loporchio D, Mulkamala L, Gorukanti K, Zarbin M, Langer P, Bhagat N. Intraocular foreign bodies: A review. *Surv Ophthalmol* 2016;61:582-596.
- 3 Mutie D Mwangi N. Assessing an eye injury patient. *Comm Eye Health J* 2015;28(91):46-48.

How to apply an eye shield

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Rationale

Applying an eye shield protects an injured eye from further damage.

What you need

- Tape
- A rigid eye shield

If you do not have an eye shield, make one by cutting out a round piece of card approximately 8 cm in diameter. Make a single cut from the edge to the centre. Overlap the two edges and secure in place with tape to form a shallow cone (Figure 2).

Instructions

- 1 Explain to the patient that the eye needs to be protected.
- 2 Ensure that there is good lighting.
- 3 Wash your hands.
- 4 Prepare the eye shield.
- 5 Ask the patient to close the affected eye.
- 6 Clean and dry the skin around the eye, as well as the forehead and cheek. This will allow the tape to hold fast.
- 7 Place the shield carefully over the eye. Ensure that the edges rest comfortably on the bones around the eye and not on the eye itself, or on the soft tissues surrounding it, as this can cause further damage.
- 8 Cut an appropriate length of tape (Figure 3).
- 9 Use the tape to hold the shield in place (Figure 4).



Figure 1
Rigid eye shield and tape

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Figure 2
You can make your own eye shield using an oval piece of card

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Figure 3
Cut an appropriate length of tape

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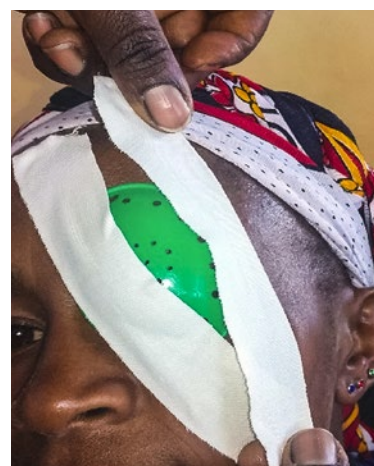


Figure 4
Apply tape to hold the shield in place

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