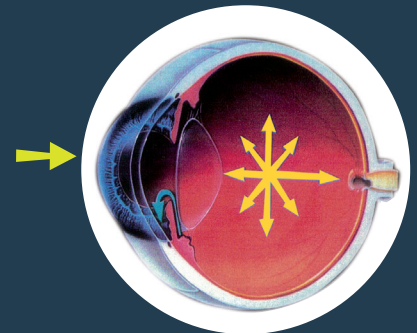


ABNORMAL EYE RUBBING

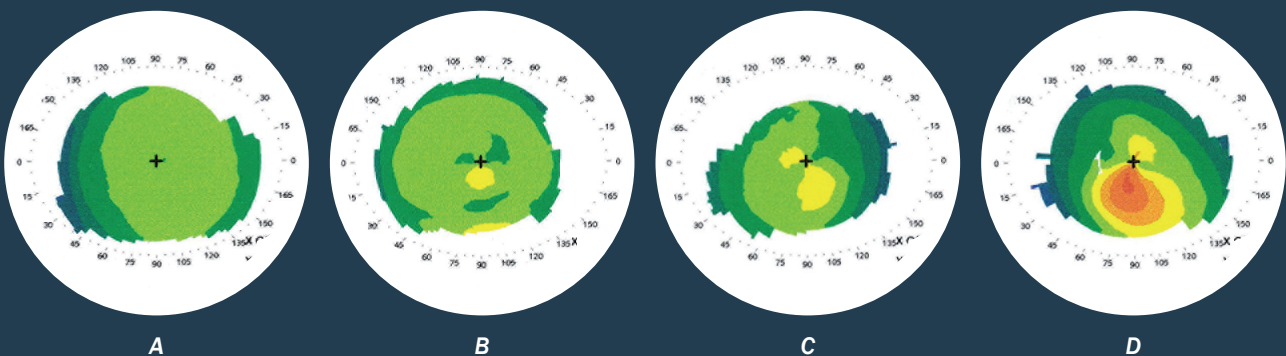
What Families Need to Know

EYE RUBBING is abnormal when it lasts **too long**, or occurs **too frequently**, or uses **too much force**, or keeps recurring over a long period.

- * Even gentle rubbing causes the pressure inside the eye to **more than double**. Hard rubbing results in pressure which can be **more than 10 times normal**.^{1,2}
- * The cornea **may become damaged** when it is squeezed between rubbing force and the high pressure inside the eye. (Figure 1).
- * The damaged cornea may become weakened and **less resistant** to the pressure inside the eye. The weakened cornea can bulge forward into an **irregular conical shape** (as illustrated by the sequence of corneal shape maps: A (normal), B, C, D (Conical cornea or keratoconus)).³



(Figure 1)



- * Eye rubbing pressure may be high enough to **cut blood flow** to the back of the eye and cause **temporary vision loss**.
- * When the cornea is very thin, (e.g. in conical cornea), rubbing may cause the cornea to **rupture**, with the risk of corneal **scarring** and **loss** of vision.^{4,5}
- * Eye rubbing pressure after any type of eye operation such as corneal graft, refractive or cataract surgery, or a cross linking procedure, may **damage** the eye.⁶
- * Rubbing can transfer **germs** to the eye, and increase the risk of **infection**.
- * The **most harmful** time for rubbing can be on waking and after removal of contact lenses.⁷

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO AVOID EYE RUBBING?

If possible, it is better **not to rub** at all. Apart from causing soreness and redness of the eyes and lids, rubbing may actually **increase** itchiness. To reduce itch and irritation, maintain all forms of **allergy avoidance and treatment**. To reduce the temptation to rub, follow your practitioner's advice for **lash hygiene** and management of **dry eye**, as well as other conditions that cause **irritation**. Sometimes **stress management** can help.

ABNORMAL EYE RUBBING

What Families Need to Know

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