

OAKLEIGH EYE CENTRE

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PTERYGIUM **(Pronounced Terygium)**

Pterygium is a common benign growth of the skin of the eye (conjunctiva). This grows over the transparent window of the eye (cornea).

Symptoms

1. It may be very uncosmetic.
2. It can become quite easily irritated especially in a smoky environment.
3. It may grow quite large and rarely obscures vision.

Prevention

It is thought that ultraviolet light causes Pterygium. Hence it is more common in tropical climates and outdoor workers. Prevention includes a wide brimmed hat and ultraviolet absorbing sunglasses. All sunglasses sold in Australia should come under Australian standards and absorb UV light.

Treatment

1. If they are small and asymptomatic, no treatment is necessary.
2. Eye whitening drops like Albalon, Murine etc. can often help if the Pterygium gets red.
3. For persistent redness, mild cortisone drops may help take away inflammation.
4. Surgery may be indicated if the above fail. The procedure takes about 15 minutes and is done with a local anaesthetic. A tiny dose of radiation maybe used after surgery to reduce the incidence of recurrence. An alternative to this is to use a conjunctival graft but this needs to be done in hospital.

After Surgery

You will need to wear an eye patch for about 24 hours after the operation.

Your eye may be sore for 7 – 10 days. It may be necessary to take some pain killers.

Your eye will be sensitive to light for about a week or two. Wear sunglasses to protect your eye from the glare.

On the next day following surgery, remove the eye patch and start using the drops/ointment as directed by your doctor.

Do not drive while wearing the eye patch. Be careful with steps and crossing roads while wearing the eye patch.