

# Eye pain

**Eye pain**, periorbital and retro-orbital pain, and **headache** or **facial pain** referred to the **orbital region** are common presenting complaints.

In a review, Brazis et al. discuss the etiologies of eye pain in the quiet eye, which is defined clinically as one with a clear cornea without redness or irritation of the conjunctiva or sclera.

The causes of eye pain may be divided into two groups:

(1) those associated with abnormal localizing ophthalmologic and neuro-ophthalmologic findings (including trigeminal neuropathies)

(2) those with a normal ophthalmologic and neurologic examinations.

The latter group is further divided into the following subgroups:

(1) specific short-lasting or long-lasting headache or eye pain syndromes

(2) pain referred to the eye from other pathologic processes (secondary eye pain) sometimes distant from structures concerned with vision

(3) pain from orbital, superior orbital fissure, cavernous sinus, or intracranial infiltrative, neoplastic, or inflammatory disease processes with normal ophthalmologic and neuro-ophthalmologic exam.

Unfortunately, in some patients, no etiology for the pain syndrome is discerned and one is left with a diagnosis of idiopathic eye pain, eye strain, or atypical facial pain <sup>1)</sup>.

Eye pain may be associated with a number of different causes, some benign and others sight- or life-threatening. Because patients with eye pain may present to either a neurology or an ophthalmology clinic and because the causes of eye pain may be primarily ophthalmic or neurologic, the diagnosis and management of these patients often requires collaboration and consultation between the 2 specialties <sup>2)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>

Brazis PW, Lee AG, Stewart M, Capobianco D. Clinical review: the differential diagnosis of pain in the quiet eye. *Neurologist*. 2002 Mar;8(2):82-100. PubMed PMID: 12803694.

<sup>2)</sup>

Bowen RC, Koeppel JN, Christensen CD, Snow KB, Ma J, Katz BJ, Krauss HR, Landau K, Warner JEA, Crum AV, Straumann D, Digre KB. The Most Common Causes of Eye Pain at 2 Tertiary Ophthalmology and Neurology Clinics. *J Neuroophthalmol*. 2018 Jan 12. doi: 10.1097/WNO.0000000000000601. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 29334519.

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