

Optic nerve examination

Visual loss due to [optic nerve injury](#) after [closed traumatic brain injury](#) constitutes a formidable diagnostic and therapeutic challenge for the clinician. Assessment must be made of the site of optic nerve injury, and this is often difficult in the patient with an altered level of consciousness. A decision regarding optic nerve decompression must be formulated, yet the literature is confusing with regard to operative indications.

If [conscious](#): serial quantification of [vision](#) in each [eye](#) is important ¹⁾.

[Rosenbaum near vision card](#), if not possible check if they can count fingers.

Failing this, check for hand motion vision and lastly light perception.

Children may develop [transient cortical blindness](#).

If unconscious: check for relative [afferent pupillary defect](#) with [swinging flashlight test](#).

[Funduscopy](#): check for [papilledema](#), [preretinal hemorrhage](#), [retinal](#) detachment or retinal abnormality.

¹⁾

Kline LB, Morawetz RB, Swaid SN. Indirect injury of the optic nerve. Neurosurgery. 1984 Jun;14(6):756-64. PubMed PMID: 6462414.

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