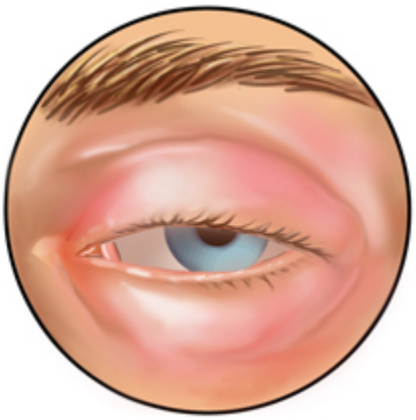
# Orbital Cellulitis
## (Infection of the Eye Socket)

Orbital cellulitis is an infection of the eye socket. The eye socket is the area around and behind the eye. It usually comes on suddenly in children, but can happen at any age. This condition can lead to death if untreated.

### CAUSES

- A germ (*bacterial*) infection of the area around and behind the eye.
- Long-term (*chronic*) sinus infections.
- An object (*foreign body*) stuck behind the eye.
- An injury that goes through (*penetrates*) to tissues of the eyelids.
- Trauma with secondary infection.
- Fracture of the boney wall or floor of the orbit.
- Serious eyelid infections.
- Bite wounds.
- Inflammation or infection of the lining membranes of the brain (*meningitis*).
- Blood poisoning or infection (*septicemia*).
- Dental area filled with pus (*abscesses*).
- Severe uncontrolled diabetes (*ketoacidosis*).



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### SYMPTOMS

- Pain in the eye.
- Redness and puffiness (*swelling*) of the eyelids. The swelling is often bad enough that the eye has to close.
- Fever and feeling generally ill.
- The lids and the cheek may be very red, hot and swollen.
- A drop in vision.
- Pain when touching the area around the eye.
- The eye itself may look like it is “popping out” (*proptosis*).
- Double vision – seeing two of everything (*diplopia*).

### DIAGNOSIS

An ophthalmologist can tell you if you have orbital cellulitis during an eye exam. It is important to know if the infection goes into the area behind the eye. True orbital cellulitis is a medical emergency. A CT scan may be needed to see if the sinuses are involved. A CT scan can also see if an abscess has formed behind the eye.

### TREATMENT

Orbital cellulitis should be treated in the hospital with medicine that kills germs (*antibiotics*). These antibiotics are given right into the bloodstream through a vein (*intravenous*).

### SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have red, swollen eyelids.
- You develop an unexplained oral temperature over 101° F (38.3° C), or as your caregiver suggests.
- You develop double vision.

### MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 04/18/2009 Document Re-Released: 11/30/2009
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