

# Black eye

A black eye is bruising and swelling around your eye. It is usually caused by a blow to the area, such as a punch or fall. It should get better within 2 to 3 weeks.

## How to treat a black eye

### Do

- ✓ hold an ice pack to the area around your eye
- ✓ take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen for pain
- ✓ after the first 2 days, put a warm heat pack or cloth to the area regularly during the day

### Don't

- ✗ do not take aspirin, unless prescribed by a GP - this can make the bruising worse
- ✗ do not press or rub the area around your eye
- ✗ do not put ice directly on your skin

▶ [How to ice a black eye](#)

## See a GP if

you have a black eye and:

- you have severe pain or swelling
- you have a headache that does not go away, or blurry vision
- the area around your eye is warm or leaking pus
- your temperature is above 38 degrees Celsius, or you feel hot and shivery
- it does not go away within 3 weeks

### Ask for an urgent appointment if

you have a black eye and:

- you're taking blood-thinning medication (such as warfarin)
- you have a bleeding disorder (such as haemophilia)

### Go to an emergency department (ED) if:

- there's blood in your eye
- the shape of your pupil (the black dot at the centre of your eye) has changed
- you had a blow to the head and have bruising around both eyes
- you have problems with your vision, such as double vision, loss of vision, you see flashing lights, halos or shadows
- you have pain when you look at a bright light
- you cannot move your eye

 [Find an emergency department](#)

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