

Approach to Eye Complaints

10/15/2017

3 main chief complaints: red eye, decreased visual acuity, and eye trauma

Basic approach

- 1) Assess visual acuity: Reading? Count fingers? Hand waving? See light? + Snellen chart
- 2) Examine the conjunctiva and cornea with fluorescein to find ulcers/abrasions
- 3) Examine the anterior chamber with a slit lamp for cell and flare. Looking to diagnose iritis or uveitis
- 4) Examine the posterior chamber (check pressure): looking to diagnose acute angle closure glaucoma. >20 mmHg is a problem especially if pressures are not equal bilaterally
- 5) Examine the retina and optic nerve with ultrasound. Looking to diagnose retinal detachment, optic neuritis, papilledema, other.

Quick Facts

- **Visual acuity is the vital sign of the eye**, don't forget to include it at the front of your objective section along with vital signs!
- **Examine carefully for foreign body**, have pt look in all directions, move around eyelids, use a light!
- **How to use Fluorescein: positive = bright green area that doesn't move with blinking**
 - o Position pt at 45 degrees,
 - o Anesthetic drops (Parcaine/other)
 - o Wet fluorescein strip with anesthetic drops
 - o Touch strip at pocket under lower eyelid
 - o Visualize with woods lamp (black light)
- **What is a slit lamp?** Device with magnification and lateral light beam on eye
Slit lamp video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9wMJ6job_0&t=62s