

# PHOTOPHOBIA

Light hurts the eyes; Sensitivity to sunlight. Photophobia is fairly common symptom and is not usually due to any underlying disease. Severe photophobia may be associated with eye problems and cause severe eye pain even in relatively low light.

## Common Causes

- Wearing of contact lenses for long periods, or wearing badly fitted contact lenses
- Eye disease, injury, or infection
- Burns to the eye
- Common migraine headache
- Meningitis
- Acute iritis or uveitis (inflammation inside eye)
- Corneal abrasion
- Corneal ulcer
- Drugs such as amphetamines, atropine, cocaine, cyclopentolate, idoxuridine, phenylephrine, scopolamine, trifluridine, tropicamide, and vidarabine
- Eye testing in which the eyes have been dilated

## Management

The discomfort of light sensitivity can be reduced by avoiding sunlight, closing the eyes, wearing dark glasses, or darkening the room. However, the cause for the light sensitivity should be determined, since proper treatment may cure the problem. If pain is moderate to severe in low-light conditions then you should see your doctor.

## Further investigation is needed when

- Light sensitivity is severe -- for instance, if you need to wear sunglasses indoors.
- Sensitivity is accompanied by headaches, red eye or blurred vision.
- Sensitivity to light does not go away in a day or two.

Again, in most cases, the cause is relatively minor and can easily be treated. However, you should be evaluated by an eye doctor or your GP if the symptoms are severe or persistent.