Provided by the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank in consultation with the University of Colorado Dept. of Ophthalmology

Eye Care Decision Tree for Unconscious / Sedated Patients on a Ventilator

Using a penlight, assess the degree of ocular surface exposure. A close examination is necessary to see beneath the lashes, which can hide incomplete eyelid closure. This assessment should be made each nursing shift or every 8 hours for each patient.

- **YES**
  - Are the lids completely closed?
  - **NO**
    - Is any of the cornea exposed and the blink rate <1 blink per 10 seconds?
      - **YES**
        - Observation of whitish corneal lesions or purulent discharge warrants an ophthalmology consult.
      - **NO**
        - 1. Apply lubricating ointment inside the lower lid every 4 hours.
        - 2. Apply a polyethylene moisture chamber (i.e. Glad Wrap). Apply in a strip temple-to-temple, covering the lower forehead, bridge of the nose and upper cheeks. Petroleum jelly on the skin of the brow, cheeks and temples will create a seal. Change the chamber every 8 hours.
        - 3. An ophthalmology consult is strongly recommended.

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