

Red reflex

Procedures and assessments video series



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Check out this month's instructional video—"Red reflex." Testing the red reflex is a simple and efficient way for FPs and pediatricians to rapidly screen children for ophthalmic conditions that, if left untreated, could lead to irreversible visual loss, blindness, and even death. By using a direct ophthalmoscope, readily available in the primary care physician's office, the practitioner illuminates both eyes from a distance of 1 m while viewing the red reflex from the pupils, comparing each eye to the other. A darkened reflex indicates that something is blocking the passage of light such as a cataract, a hazy cornea, a hemorrhage, or a scar. A white reflex indicates the presence of something white inside the eye such as a malignant tumour, a retinal infection, a cataract, or a scar. The red reflex should be checked at every well-child visit. This video offers instruction on how to perform this test along with examples of normal and abnormal results. Every year, children are left with irreversible poor vision or die because this test was done improperly or not at all. Primary care physicians should be skilled in performing this lifesaving test.

The video "Red reflex" is available at www.cfp.ca. Go to this article online, then click on **CFPlus** in the menu at the top right-hand side of the page.

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Competing interests
None declared

Video 7. Red reflex



