

Burns to the sclera, conjunctiva, cornea, and eyelid are considered ocular burns. Ocular burn injuries are classified by etiologic agents as either chemical injuries (ie, acid, alkali) or radiant energy injuries (ie, thermal, ultraviolet). Chemical injuries to the eye represent one of the true ophthalmic emergencies. While almost any chemical can cause ocular irritation, serious damage generally results from either strongly basic (alkaline) compounds or acidic compounds. Alkali injuries are more common and can be more deleterious. Bilateral chemical exposure is especially devastating, often resulting in complete visual disability. Immediate, prolonged irrigation, followed by aggressive early management and close long-term monitoring, is essential to promote ocular surface healing and to provide the best opportunity for visual rehabilitation.