

A round-up of the eye-related hot topics that have been trending on social media over the last few weeks.

### #GrahamNorton #eyelids

Graham Norton's chat show is always a must-watch in my book. I was particularly surprised to find two eye-related stories trending from one of the latest episodes. Firstly, Ambika Mod was talking about her role in the new Netflix adaptation of *One Day* (which I may or may not be completely obsessed with), but the conversation took a tangent when she revealed that she sleeps with her eyes partially open [1]. She explained that it was a lifelong quirk of hers, though I was relieved to see a very strong Bells reflex when she demonstrated it. Hopefully her corneas aren't getting too exposed! The musical guest that episode was the legendary Gabrielle, who is iconic for always covering her right eye, whether it be with her hair, a hat, an eyepatch, or sunglasses. Not everyone knows the reason why, triggering numerous articles for curious viewers. It turns out that Gabrielle has spoken extensively about this in the past – it all started with a childhood right upper-lid ptosis. Alongside the droop, she says that her eyelid used to 'flicker' when she was a kid, this being a target for bullies that drove her into depression and suicidal thoughts in her teenage years. Now it is unfathomable for her to imagine going out without the eye covered [2].

### #bioniceye

### #bigthankstomyplumberGeorge

Inspiration for these articles come from many sources, usually what I see or hear online, but sometimes life hands you odd connections. I had a plumber round to help with a water leak in my ceiling, and after telling him that I was an eye doctor (and discussing the latest What's Trending of *Eye News*, of course) he mentioned that I should look up a very special neighbour of his, Myah Hauxwell. And it just so happened that she was a recent guest on *This Morning* to talk about her extraordinary story [3]. Having been born with microphthalmia, she has undergone 24 surgeries since birth and, much like Gabrielle, she has had to be strong in the face of bullies throughout her childhood. Myah has most recently been in America for a state-of-the-art prosthetic eye, which can glow in the dark and has a digital iris and dilating pupil, alongside other new prosthetics. This has been made possible by her mum's hard work covering extra shifts and the generosity of others with fundraising. The real tear-jerker of the segment came with the presenters saying

that they will be paying the £4000 needed for the next prosthetic. I've already said that I'm watching *One Day* which means I'm crying enough as it is, I don't need *This Morning* setting me off as well! And looking at the response online, I was not the only one moved by the piece.

### #Stargardts #sightloss #football

The aforementioned segment on *This Morning* highlighted the struggles of being a kid with an ocular condition, as well as the toll it can take on a parent. These themes also came across in recent interviews with ex-England footballing legend Michael Owen and his son James, who has Stargardt disease [4]. James spoke about being diagnosed when he was eight years old, with the impact this had on his school life and the negative thoughts that came with it. Though he now feels like he is a different person from that kid, living each day not defined by his condition and with a much more positive mental outlook. Michael spoke candidly about being a parent in this context, when he first broke down, his worries about the ramifications on James' life, and his prayers for a cure. In a particularly touching moment, he expressed how he would trade his own eyes with his son in an instant, if it were possible [5]. This is all ahead of a new documentary the two are doing together, exploring sight loss in the world of football.

### #internationalinjuries

### #saturdaynight #nailgun

A case out of Taiwan has made international headlines with a man falling asleep face-down, putting pressure directly onto his left eye, after a night of heavy drinking and taking medication for insomnia. This caused haemorrhage and swelling around the eye that ultimately led to an ischaemic optic neuropathy and choroidopathy [6]. With its association to alcohol the condition has previously been known as 'Saturday night retinopathy' [7]. Unfortunately for the patient in this case, it has led to permanent vision loss out of his affected eye. On the theme of accidents and injuries, many reported on a case out of Malaysia of a construction worker accidentally firing a nail gun while he looked down it's barrel to check why it had jammed [8]. The 3.2cm nail flew millimetres past his left eye, lacerating his eyelid and fracturing the orbit, before embedding in his frontal lobe. He was

rushed into emergency surgery where the nail was removed in its entirety. While he was medically well enough to be discharged after only five days in hospital, he did not have vision in his left eye and is now receiving ongoing care in his home country [9]. It probably won't come as a surprise to hear that he was not wearing safety specs at the time of the injury, a tale as old as time in my emergency clinics, though thankfully I have not seen anyone with a presentation as remarkable as this. I may be a dab hand at removing corneal foreign bodies, but taking out a nail lodged in the brain as part of a transorbital-penetrating intracranial injury might be one step too far. I don't think I'll be seeing it as a required sign off in the college portfolio anytime soon!

### References

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