

What's trending?

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

#scleratattoo

Yes, you read that correctly. Scleral tattoos are a relatively new form of extreme body modification. Oddly enough, 'sclera tattoo' comes up with more hits on Twitter and YouTube than 'scleral tattoo'. The procedure involves injecting a mixture of dye and saline just under the bulbar conjunctiva in order to cause pigmentation to the sclera. For one Canadian woman [1], the procedure went horribly wrong and she has taken to social media to share her story and progress; and to encourage those considering the procedure to do their research before embarking on this [2]. Catt Gallinger is a body modification enthusiast. She wanted to have a scleral tattoo as she felt it would help her "feel more home in [her] body". Unfortunately, she is now at risk of losing her eye, and certainly will be unlikely to regain full vision in that eye. At the time of writing this article, Catt has suffered from a corneal ulcer as a result of inadequate eye closure and is also having conjunctival excision with amniotic membrane transplant.

Scleral tattoos have gained increasing popularity [3]. *The American Journal of Case Reports* published a case series in April this year of two scleral tattoos resulting in orbital cellulitis, posterior scleritis and granuloma formation [4]. The American Academy of Ophthalmology published a case video report in May this year of a young man requiring enucleation resulting from botched scleral tattooing [5]. I recently attended the British & Eire Association of Vitreoretinal Surgeons (BEAVRS) 2017 Meeting, where a case of scleral tattooing was presented. The patient performed the procedure on himself, with disastrous consequences, as a DIY attempt to cosmetically treat his chronic red eye.

#colouredcontactlenses

The things people do for beauty! "No pain, no gain" – at least that's how the adage goes. Whilst less extreme than scleral tattooing, coloured contact lenses are certainly not risk-free. Over the Halloween period, public safety announcements were put out warning against the potential risk of blindness associated with wearing any contact lenses (coloured included) without a

prescription [6,7]. The problems result from ill-fitting contacts or poor hygiene, or both. Novelty lenses are readily available online, and when contacts are purchased over-the-counter, neither fitting nor lens hygiene are discussed.

One particular story, though two years old, is making the rounds again being cited in *Seventeen* [8], *Refinery29* [9], and even as part of the public safety announcement by Eye Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (EPSO) [10]. Michigan teen Leah Carpenter was left partially blind after wearing coloured contacts as part of her Halloween costume as a Powerpuff Girl. Sadly, stories like hers are not isolated, yet they do not seem to deter some. Select tweets include, "Nearly blinded myself last year at Halloween with contact lenses, let's see how this year goes" [11] or "Halloween contact lenses are so uncomfortable but look so good! Do I put up with the pain?" [12] Hmmm...tough call ladies.

#HonourofKings

Moving on from vision loss as a side-effect of vanity, extreme gaming apparently may also be risky for your eyes. A young Chinese woman reportedly lost her vision secondary to a retinal artery occlusion after a 24-hour binge session on the popular smartphone game Honour of Kings [13]. Her doctors put the vision loss down to her frequent binging sessions, however, UK doctors think it unlikely that the vision loss was related to the extreme game playing.

#Cheerios #blind

It hasn't been a good couple of months for young Canadians avoiding eye mishaps. *JAMA Pediatrics* published the case report in early October of an 11-year-old boy whose vision deteriorated over a period of eight months to hand movements at 30cm. During this time, he was on a severely limited diet in order to prevent dietary triggers from causing flare-ups of his eczema. The culprit foods were Cheerios, potatoes, apples, cucumbers, pork and lamb. He was found to have Bitot spots and optic neuropathy, both signs of severe vitamin A deficiency. With intensive replacement, his vision picked up to 6/240, but unfortunately his prognosis remains poor [14].

It probably hasn't been a good week for Cheerios either.

References:

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[All links last accessed November 2017]

SECTION EDITOR



Stephanie Chiu,

Specialty Registrar year 3,
Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield, UK.

E: sjc.chiu@gmail.com