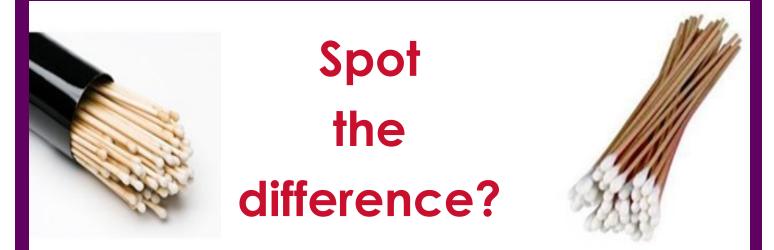


## The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

# Safety Alert

May 2019



### Corneal burns caused by Silver Nitrate sticks

A patient attends ED with a corneal foreign body. The doctor attempts removal using what they think is a cotton bud.

#### It's a Silver Nitrate stick.

The patient suffers a burn to the cornea, requiring ophthalmology admission...

#### **NRLS data shows that this is not a hypothetical risk.** In a room dimmed for slit lamp examination, the two sticks are easy to mix up.

#### How to decrease the risk of error in your ED

Keep ENT and eye resources separated.

• Ensure Silver Nitrate applicators are kept in their original packaging.

• After use, ensure remaining applicators are removed from clinical areas and consider locking up.

For other RCEM issued Safety Alerts and Safety Newsflashes see: <u>www.rcem.ac.uk/safetyalerts</u>