

CAUSES OF DRY EYE

AGING

As we age, tear production decreases. Men and women of any age can be affected. However, after menopause and during pregnancy, women are especially susceptible.

CONTACT LENSES

Wearing contact lenses often increases tear evaporation. This can result in irritation, increased protein deposits, infection, and pain. Dry eye has been shown to be the leading cause of contact lens discomfort.

MEDICATIONS

A variety of common medications reduce tear secretion. These include decongestants, antihistamines, diuretics, beta-blockers, sleeping pills, antidepressants, pain relievers and alcohol.

ENVIRONMENT

Occasional or continual exposure to various environments can reduce eye lubrication. These include sunny, dry or windy conditions; areas with heaters, dehumidifiers, fans or air conditioners; work settings (i.e.; areas with chemicals or hair dryers), high altitudes, smoke or air pollution and sand, dust or airborne pollen.

AUTO IMMUNE DISEASE

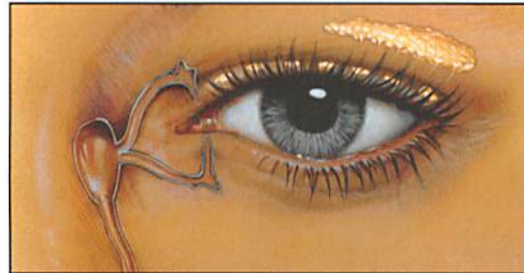
Auto Immune Disease can be accompanied by a dry mouth and dry eyes. This combination of symptoms is called Sjogren's Syndrome.

ABOUT TEARS

The human eye is lubricated by two kinds of tears produced by glands in the upper and lower eyelid.

CONSTANT TEARS are continuously formed to lubricate the eye and contain natural antibiotics to help fight infections.

REFLEX TEARS are produced only in response to irritation, injury, or emotion and help rinse the surface of the eye.



A balance is necessary between the two types of tears to ensure that your eyes are comfortable and protected. When constant tear flow is reduced, there is irritation that can cause excessive reflex tearing ("watery eyes"). These excess tears lack the oil needed to keep from evaporating and do not lubricate the eye.

A lack of tears, improper lubrication, or tears draining too quickly from the eye result in a condition known as Dry Eye. Dry Eye is a common problem that is easily diagnosed.

TEARS can be reproduced by using eye drops called artificial tears. They replace the moisture that is missing and lubricate the eyes. They temporarily soothe dry eye symptoms. However, they can also wash away the natural, infection-fighting tear film. For many people, artificial tears do not offer relief and are impractical.

TREATMENT

Artificial tears and medications have provided a quick, short-term solution to dry eye. Today tear duct closure which allows you to retain your own natural tears may be the best solution.

Temporary closure of the tear duct (punctal canal) is accomplished by inserting a tiny plug (like a sink stopper) to prevent tear drainage. This allows your own tears to bathe your eye for a longer period of time. In about one week this plug will dissolve and wash away with your tears. You and your doctor can then evaluate the benefits of tear duct closure for you.

Long-term closure of the tear drainage ducts involves the use of a non-dissolvable, yet removable, plug to seal the tear duct. This is a painless procedure that takes only a few minutes in your doctor's office.



Enlargement of Intraocular Plug



Enlargement of Punctum Plug

RELIEF

Relief from the discomfort of dry eyes may be immediate for some patients, while for others relief may be more gradual. Most patients find the reduction in artificial tear use and related costs very beneficial.

Symptom Checklist

If you experience any of the symptoms below, you may have the condition known as Dry Eye. Please read this brochure and see your doctor for evaluation and treatment.

- Dry Sensation
- Scratchy, Gritty Feeling
- Burning
- Stinging
- Itching
- Excess Tearing (Watery Eyes)
- Mucous Discharge
- Irritation from Wind or Smoke
- Redness
- Tired Eyes
- Light Sensitivity
- Contact Lens Discomfort
- Contact Lens Solution Sensitivity
- Soreness
- Lid Infections/Sties
- Sensitivity to Artificial Tears
- Eyelids Stuck Together at Awakening

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