

BLEPHARITIS



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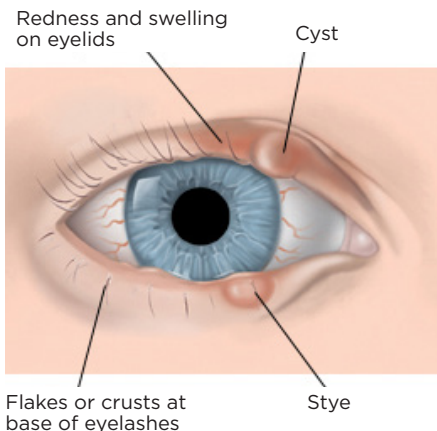
BLEPHARITIS

WHAT IS BLEPHARITIS?

Blepharitis is a common condition that involves inflammation of the eyelids. It is often persistent and usually affects both eyes, however its symptoms can be reduced if effort is made to maintain good eyelid hygiene.

Those more likely to be affected by Blepharitis are people who have a fair complexion and skin conditions such as oily skin or dandruff. Blepharitis is caused by the production of unhealthy lubricating oils in the glands in the eyelids which can result in the eyes becoming dry and irritable.

Blepharitis is not contagious and your eyesight will rarely be affected however, it can be an uncomfortable and irritating condition.



SYMPTOMS

Symptoms may be constant or intermittent.

Common symptoms include redness of the eyes, the eyelids appearing inflamed and a crusty coating may develop along the base of the eyelashes and along the edge of the eyelids.

Often an itching or burning sensation develops, or you may feel like something is in your eye when you blink.

Sometimes you may experience excessive production of tears or watering and cysts or styes may develop in the eyelids.

Most often both eyes are affected, but sometimes the symptoms appear more prominent in one eye.

TREATMENT

There is no immediate cure for Blepharitis however, if you maintain good eyelid hygiene you can control the symptoms.

Your hygiene routine should aim to soothe the eyelids, unplug any blocked meibomian glands (the tiny glands in the eyelids that lie just behind the eyelashes) and clear out any stagnant oily secretions from these glands.

Your routine should be carried out daily

and must consist of three parts: **warmth, massage and cleansing.** Remove any contact lenses before following the routine.

Warmth

Warmth should be applied to the eye(s) for 4-5 minutes with wheat pack or a specially designed heat bag. A moist cloth can be used but doesn't usually hold the heat well enough.

Massage

Immediately after applying the warmth massage the upper and lower eyelids towards the edge of the lids, for example from top to bottom on the upper lids. The idea is that you are moving the oily secretions toward the edge of the eyelid so that they can come out of the

glands. Massage 5 to 10 times over about 30 seconds immediately following the warming.

Massaging should be neither too gentle nor too firm. It should be relatively comfortable and you should not press hard enough to actually hurt your eyeball under the closed lids. Always massage with the eyes shut.

Cleansing

After the warmth and massage stages you must clean the eyelids.

There are a number of ways this can be done, but the traditional method is to use a cotton wool bud that has been dipped in diluted baby shampoo (add a few drops of baby shampoo to a small cup of warm water).

Squeeze out excess liquid from the cotton bud to prevent drips getting into your eyes, then try to clean off any crusts at the base of the eyelids. After cleaning the eyelids with the cotton wool bud, wash off the shampoo from the eyelids, using a flannel or cloth.

You can buy special lid wipes from the chemist which are sometimes more effective.



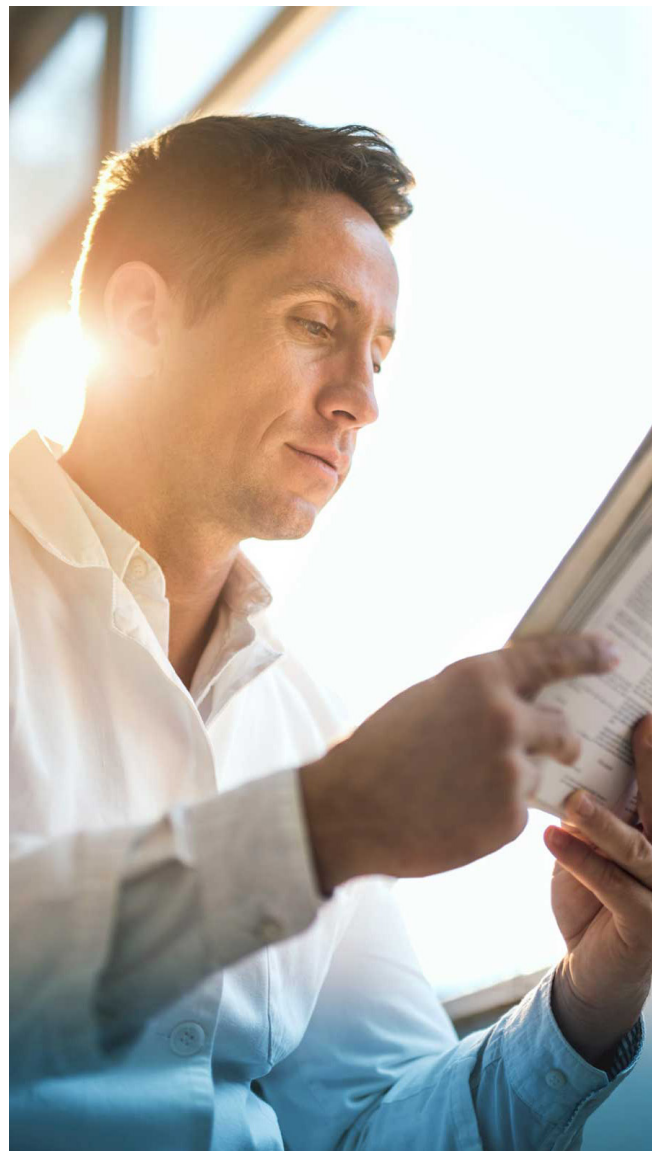
When Blepharitis symptoms flare up you should follow the above routine at least twice daily until they settle. Once the symptoms have eased, keep doing this routine once a day, every day, to prevent further flare-ups.

DRY EYES

Blepharitis is often associated with dry eyes. This is because part of the tear film is produced by the meibomian glands so if they are blocked or not working well, your eyes will not be as well lubricated.

Tear dysfunction can lead to excess tear production and watering. In fact Blepharitis is the most common cause of watery eyes.

In this case eye drops may help ease symptoms. You may need to use them regularly to ease dry, irritated eyes.



AUCKLAND EYE

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Auckland Eye is New Zealand's centre of excellence for eye care, with a totally tailored approach that provides the best possible outcome for patients. Our team of leading experts are highly trained in their specialist fields, providing assessment and management of a comprehensive range of eye conditions.

Combined with Oasis Surgical – Auckland's premier eye surgery facility – we offer superior treatment and world-class care in a relaxed, friendly environment. Both centres are independently accredited against EQUIP 5 standards for excellence in patient care and services.

Auckland Eye is centrally located in Remuera, with easy motorway access, plentiful off-street parking and wheelchair access. There are additional dedicated consulting facilities in Takapuna and New Lynn, as well as appointments available at a wide range of other locations across the Auckland region.

Auckland Eye is an affiliated provider to Southern Cross Health Society.

For more information on Blepharitis, please contact our friendly specialist team.

AUCKLAND EYE SURGEONS



Dr Stephen Best
BSc, MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Botany



Dr Stuart Carroll
MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Silverdale, Takapuna



Dr Shenton Chew
BHB, MBChB, MD,
PGDipOphthBS, FRANZCO
Remuera, Takapuna, New Lynn



Dr Dean Corbett
BSc, MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Takapuna, Orewa



Dr Archie McGeorge
MBChB, PhD, FRANZCO
Remuera, Takapuna, Orewa



Dr Justin Mora
MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Papakura, Pukekohe,
New Lynn



Dr Yvonne Ng
MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Botany, Henderson,
Takapuna

AUCKLAND EYE SURGEONS



Dr Sue Ormonde
MBChB, MD, FRCOphth,
FRANZCO
Remuera, Takapuna, Westgate



Dr David Pendergrast
MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Papakura, Pukekohe



Dr Alison Pereira
MBChB, FRCOphth, FRANZCO
Remuera, Takapuna



Assoc. Prof. Philip Polkinghorne
MBChB, MD, FRANZCO, FRCOphth
Remuera, Papatoetoe, Whangarei



Dr Paul Rosser
MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, Albany, New Lynn



Dr Jo Sims
MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, New Lynn, Papatoetoe



Dr Sarah Welch
BSc, BMedSci, MBChB, FRANZCO
Remuera, New Lynn, Pukekohe



8 St Marks Road, Remuera
phone (64) 09 529 2480
fax (64) 09 529 2481
email admin@aucklandeye.co.nz
web www.aucklandeye.co.nz

