

# WATERY EYE



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[www.aucklandeye.co.nz](http://www.aucklandeye.co.nz)

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Tears are formed by the lacrimal gland, which lies beneath the outer part of the upper lid, and by cells in the conjunctival surface of the eye.

## WATERING OF THE EYE (EPIPHORA)

This is a very common symptom for which there are a wide variety of causes. In general the problem results either from an over production of tears or reduced drainage of tears.

## CAUSES OF OVERPRODUCTION OF TEARS

Anything that irritates the eye, such as a foreign body or a scratch to the surface, will result in epiphora. The watering is a protective mechanism to help clear debris away from the eye. Watering also occurs in emotive states or as a response to bright lights.

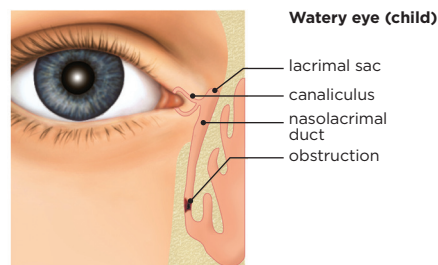
The most common cause is blepharitis. This condition occurs when there is inflammation in the eyelid glands and sometimes debris accumulates along the lid margin (edge of the eye lid), resulting in irritation. This can be treated with regular lid margin cleansing and may require courses of topical or oral antibiotics.

## DRAINAGE OF TEARS

Tears are drained from the eye by narrow passages (canaliculi) that begin in the inner corner of the eyelids. These passages drain into a tear sac in the inner corner of the eye (lacrimal sac) and pass down into the nose via a duct (nasolacrimal duct).

## OBSTRUCTION TO TEAR DRAINAGE CHILDREN

Epiphora is a very common problem, occurring in up to 30% of infants. There is a membrane at the lower end of the nasolacrimal duct, which will open on its own in over 90% of cases by the age of 12 months. If symptoms persist when the child is one year old, the condition can be cured in 95% of cases by passing a probe along the passageways under a brief general anaesthetic. Occasionally, this is performed earlier if the child has particularly troublesome symptoms.

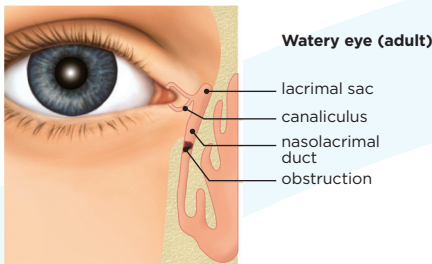


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### ADULTS

Watery eye may occur at any age and results from a gradual narrowing of the upper end of the nasolacrimal duct, generally from chronic inflammation. Syringing the tear ducts may give temporary relief, but this is mainly used to aid in diagnosis. The treatment is to make a new passageway for tears to flow into the nose, bypassing the blocked duct. This is a more major procedure but is generally performed under local anaesthesia with sedation.



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 Albany 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 Watery Eye, please contact our friendly specialist team.**

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