

BLEPHARITIS

Blepharitis is a common condition where the eyelids become inflamed.



BLEPHARITIS

Also known as meibomian gland dysfunction, blepharitis is a common condition that involves inflammation of the eyelids. It is often persistent and usually affects both eyes. It is caused by the production of unhealthy lubricating oils in the eyelid's glands, which can result in the eyes becoming dry and irritable.

- Blepharitis is more common in people who have skin conditions, such as oily skin or dandruff.
- Blepharitis is not contagious and rarely affects eyesight.
- Generally, both eyes are affected, but sometimes the symptoms appear more prominently in one eye.

CAUSES

Blepharitis is caused by a disfunction of the meibomium glands in the eyelids. Blepharitis can also be associated with bacterial infections in the eyelash follicles and eyelid glands.

Other common triggers include:

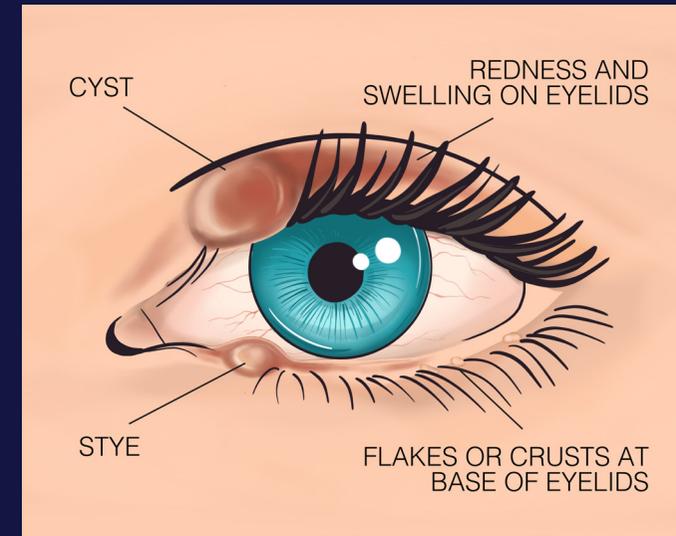
- Skin conditions such as dermatitis, acne rosacea and dandruff.
- Trauma caused by chemical fumes, smoke, personal injury, or drug allergies and sensitivities.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms may be constant or intermittent. Common symptoms include:

- An itching or burning sensation.
- A feeling that something is in the eye when you blink.
- Excessive production of tears or watering.
- Redness of the eyes.
- The eyelids appearing inflamed.
- A crusty coating developing along the base of the eyelashes and the edge of the eyelids.
- Cysts or styes can also develop in the eyelids.

POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS



TREATMENT

Treatment aims to encourage better function of the meibomian glands in the eyelids and resolve any underlying cause such as infection. In some cases, a definitive cure cannot be found. Usually, symptoms can be controlled with the maintenance of good eyelid hygiene. Eye make-up and contact lenses should not be used until the condition is under control.

It is important to maintain an eyelid hygiene routine. 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. If your symptoms are flaring up, it is best to increase this to twice daily until they settle.

Antibiotics in the form of drops, ointments, or tablets can be recommended by your ophthalmologist.

TREATMENT

1. WARMTH

Warmth should be applied to the eye(s) for 4-5 minutes with a wheat pack or specially designed heat bag. The heat softens the clogged oils in the glands. A moist cloth can be substituted, but usually does not hold sufficient heat.

2. MASSAGE

Immediately after applying the warmth, massage the upper and lower eyelids towards the edge of the lids. Make sure you cover all the lid. The idea is to move the oily secretions toward the edge of the eyelid, so that they can come out of glands. Massage the lids 5-10 times over about 30 seconds immediately following the warming.

3. CLEANSING

After the warmth and massage stages, you must clean the eyelids. There are various ways this can be done. The most effective is to use specially designed wipes or cleansing solutions from your pharmacist.

Alternatively you can 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 use it to clean any crusts at the base of the eyelids.

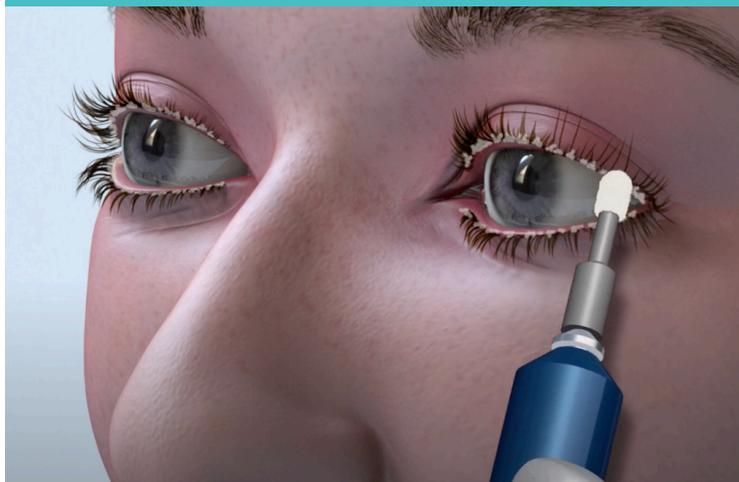
After cleaning the eyelids, remove the shampoo from the eyelids, using a flannel or cloth. You can also buy special lid wipes from the chemist, which are sometimes more effective.

DRY EYE TREATMENT

Blepharitis is the common cause of dry eyes. This is because part of the tear film is produced by the meibomian glands. If they are blocked or not working well, your eyes will not be as well lubricated. Eye drops may help to manage this.

Sometimes, tear dysfunction can lead to excess tear production and watering. In fact, blepharitis is the most common cause of watery eyes as well. Eye drops can also be used to help this.

Your optometrist or ophthalmologist may refer you to Auckland Eye's Dry Eye Clinic for specialised tests and potentially AB Max treatment, Lipiflow or IPL, for blepharitis.



AB MAX™ is an advanced treatment to remove scurf and bacterial debris that has built up on the outer eyelids. It will also gently massage the outer eyelid to help reduce or alleviate the debilitating symptoms of eyelid inflammation.



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Oasis Surgical & Dry Eye Clinic,
2 MacMurray Rd, Remuera



3 Fred Thomas Dr, Takapuna



Ormiston Medical Clinic, 211 Ormiston Rd



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