



Most people don't even realize how much eyelid health can affect the eyes. Inflammation of the eyelids, conjunctiva, eyelid vessels, and glands, a condition called blepharitis, can cause serious discomfort and ocular irritation. Maintaining proper eyelid hygiene and health can improve dry eyes, tearing, redness around the eyes, and even allergy symptoms. Different types of blepharitis can be treated when the root of the problem is addressed.

Types of Blepharitis

Anterior Blepharitis

Due to seborrheic or staphylococcal causes, scaly skin, waxy lash bases, and greasy oils are seen in anterior blepharitis. Lid hygiene and eradicating microbes are the mainstay of treatment.

Demodex

A specific type of anterior blepharitis is caused by an infestation of Demodex mites that wrap themselves around the base of the lashes. The Demodex mites can cause inflammation in blepharitis and clog the meibomian glands. This can lead to chronic blepharitis with recurrent flares if left untreated.

Ocular Rosacea

Rosacea is a chronic inflammatory condition of the skin that can also affect the eyelids. The inflammation of the skin and in the tiny blood vessels in the eyelid contribute to this type of blepharitis. By controlling the inflammation, often with avoidance of triggers, such as sun exposure and alcohol, and initiating treatment with anti-inflammatory medications can improve the irritation and redness.

Meibomian Gland Dysfunction

The meibomian glands secrete the oil component of your tears so that they stick to ocular surface to provide adequate lubrication and nutrients to the eye. Many people have unhealthy glands, so the oil becomes scant or sticky, leading to rapid tear evaporation and inflamed, irritated eyelids. Warm compresses, supplements, and IPL can help improve the quality and flow of oil from the meibomian glands.

Tips to Improve Eyelid Health

1. **Lid hygiene** – Scrub your eyelids and lashes daily with baby shampoo. Make this part of your daily routine in the shower. Sometimes hypochlorous acid spray can also help to cleanse the eyelid skin as well as the lashes and rid bacteria.
2. **Warm compresses** – Apply a warm wet washcloth to the eyelids, and give yourself a gentle massage over the eyelids. Not only will this feel fantastic, but it will help your oil glands (meibomian glands) secrete a healthier free-flowing oil.



3. **Ocular lubrication** – While it may seem counterintuitive to add tears to a tearing eye, dry eyes can often cause the body to oversecrete tears. By using artificial tears to lubricate the eyes a few times throughout the day, this can decrease excessive tearing.
4. **Treatment for Demodex** – The little mites that attach to the eyelids can be treated with tea tree oil (diluted in water) lid scrubs or a new prescription eye drop called XDEM VY™. XDEM VY™ works by paralyzing the mites so that they effectively fall off of the lashes. The eye drop is used twice daily for 6 weeks to eradicate the mites and improve redness.

Lid hygiene should be performed daily, even when no symptoms of blepharitis are present.