

## LID HYGIENE ROUTINE

### **STEP ONE: Warm Compresses**

Place a handful of dry rice or beans in a clean, dry sock. Tie the sock & dampen the outside of the sock. Do not soak! Place the rice compress into the microwave for 1 minute. (DO NOT COOK RICE!)

Check temp. of the compress & when comfortable, place it over your closed eye for 5 minutes. DO NOT BURN YOURSELF! Use warm compresses 3x/daily. Use new compress daily.

### **STEP TWO: Baby Shampoo Scrubs or Lash Cleanser**

Warm compresses help open clogged oil glands & warm up the oily secretions (called sebum) within them. After heat therapy, use baby shampoo to scrub the base of each & every eyelash. Keep your eyes closed gently & use circular motion to help express the sebum in the glands. Shampooing also helps remove oil-crusted debris and bacteria from the base of the eyelashes. Make sure your fingernails are trimmed to avoid scratches. Use warm water to rinse the baby shampoo. Clean up to 3 times daily. Hypochlorous acid is a natural way to clean the lids and lashes.

### **STEP THREE: Artificial Tears**

There are many brands of artificial tears (ATs). Choose the one that is right for you. (Systane Ultra is my favorite.) If you feel like your eyes are very irritated, use an ATs for moderate to severe dry eye. Placing the AT bottle in the refrigerator cool the tears. Cold drops feel soothing to an inflamed eye. With severe symptoms of dry eye, a liquid gel or vaseline like ointment (Gentle liquid gel or Refresh PM) is necessary. The thicker the drop, the more your vision might be blurred from the drop. Thicker drops may feel sticky but lubricate better than thinner drops. Vision will clear 2-5 minutes after gel or ointment placement. Use as directed.

## TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR DRY EYE

There is no cure for dry eye.

By finding the treatment that works best for you, your eye doctor can help improve your dry eye.

- I. **PUNCTAL PLUGS**. Retains tears your eye naturally produces. Takes minutes to place (in clinic) with minimal discomfort.
- II. **ACUICYN**: RX only; natural product with safety profile of saline. Kills demodex mites and bacteria within seconds. Does not burn or sting. Available @ FECPS for \$35/ bottle
- III. **STEROIDS**: Decreases the inflammatory component of dry eyes. Should be used for a limited period of time & under direct supervision. Side effects include increasing eye pressure. Never treat with steroids without evaluation, as steroids can worsen some eye diseases.
- IV. **RESTASIS**: Decreases inflammation & improves eye's natural ability to produce tears. Use w artificial tears. Side effects including transient burning, stinging, and blurry vision. Takes ~4-6 weeks to work.
- V. **XIIDRA**: Decrease inflammation & improves tear production. Side effects: bad taste, itching, and stinging. Takes 4-6 weeks to work.
- VI. **OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS**: 3 tablets of 1,000mg flax seed oil may help improve dry eye symptoms
- VII. **DOXYCYCLINE**: Oral antibiotic with anti-inflammatory properties when used at low doses; can cause GI or skin sensitivity

# OCULAR ROSACEA DRY EYE & EYE PAIN

PATIENT HANDOUT



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## BLEPHARITIS, DRY EYE, & EYE PAIN

Dry, irritated eyes are one of the most common reasons why patients visit their eye doctor. Dry eyes become symptomatic in the 3rd to 4th decade of life, are more common in women, and with age. Dry eyes are a constant, chronic, and severely bothersome problem for many people.

There are many diseases that are associated with dry eye syndrome including autoimmune illnesses like rheumatoid arthritis, Sjogren's syndrome, thyroid disease, or fibromyalgia. Poor eyelid closure, the inability to blink fully, or other types of eyelid anatomy problems worsen dry eye. Cigarette smoking and environmental irritants can make dry eye worse. Sometimes, CPAP machines can blow a stream of air near the eyes and cause them to dry out. Sleeping under a fan/vent or sleeping face down and/or on your side can worsen dry eye. Rosacea, specifically ocular rosacea also known as "blepharitis", can cause symptoms of dry eyes.

**Unfortunately, there is no cure for blepharitis or dry eyes.** Fortunately, good management can help reduce your symptoms to a tolerable level.

### Demodex Folliculorum

Demodex is a skin mite that lives on the face of all humans. On average, there are 5 demodex mites/sq.cm of skin. The mites eat dead skin cells within the eyelash follicles. Infestations around the eyelids and lashes can cause ocular surface inflammation and can cause blepharitis/ocular rosacea. Hypochlorous acid sprays like Acuicyn, sprayed directly to the eyelashes, can help kill demodex nymphs and mites. Allow the spray to soak to the base of the lashes for 1 minute, and once nearly dry, massage to the lash base. Use 2x/daily.



Blepharitis is an inflammatory condition of the oil secreting glands (known as Meibomian glands) in the eyelid. There are 40 glands in the upper eyelid and 20 glands in the lower lid. When these glands malfunction, the glands cannot express oily secretions onto the surface of the eye. Without an oily layer to protect and coat the watery tear film, tears quickly evaporate. As a result, the eye surface becomes dry and sends a signal to the brain to produce reflexive tears. Reflexive tears pour onto the eye and cause the eye to water (especially outdoors in windy conditions!). Thus, dry eyes often tear. Dry eyes can cause a sticky "film" across the eyes that improves with forced blink. Patients often blink and squeeze their eyelids to help spread their scant tear film across the surface of their eyes (like a windshield wiper smearing rain across a windshield). Forced blinking helps smooth the tear film across the surface of the eye momentarily, but when the tears break apart and dry out again, the vision once again becomes blurry as incoming light rays scatter across a dry, broken tear film. Dry eyes can become irritated, sore, and painful. Blepharitis is one of the most common causes of dry eyes! When the glands in the eyelid become completely clogged, oily secretions back up in to the eyelid and explode, causing a red, tender internal styte, called a "chalazion".

### SYMPTOMS OF DRY EYES & BLEPHARITIS

Eye and eyelid irritation  
Eyelid swelling  
Itchy Eyelids  
Redness of the eyelid or eye  
Sandy/Gritty sensation (Foreign body sensation)  
Burning, stinging eye pain  
Sharp pain behind central upper eyelid  
Fluctuations in vision  
Blurry vision improving with blinking  
Filminess of eyes  
Mucous discharge  
Crusting of eyelashes and lids in the morning  
Watery eyes & reflexive tearing with windy conditions, in AC, or while reading, watching TV, driving.

### BLEPHARITIS



### PUNCTAL PLUG

