

Blepharitis - Patient information

How do eye lids work?

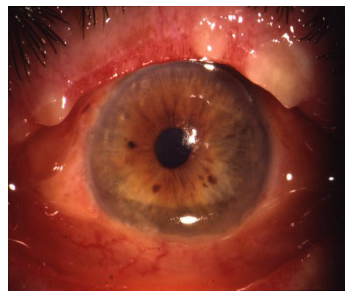
The eye lids protect the eye and they also spread the tears over the eye's surface to give clear vision. Within the eye lids small glands called meibomian glands release a waxy substance to reduce tear evaporation.

What is Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is a common condition of the eye lids, it particularly occurs in older people and can be very irritating. There are two main types; Anterior blepharitis, effecting the base of the eye lashes with a dandruff like condition and posterior blepharitis where the (meibomian) glands become partially blocked, inflamed and infected with a low grade infection.



Blepharitis



Mild

Severe Blepharitis

What are the symptoms of blepharitis?

Typical symptoms are redness and soreness around the eye lids, and grittiness in the eyes. There may be crusting around the eye lashes and some will get a morning discharge. Occasionally the eyes get so sore that a reflex watering may occur.

Is there a treatment for blepharitis?

The treatment involves regular lid hygiene - and drops to supplement the tears. The lid hygiene needs to be carried out regularly to prevent the symptoms returning.

1. **Heating the lids:** this is needed to melt the waxy debris in the eye lids. It takes around 10-15 minutes to do time and can be done with a facial sauna, or by using a hot facial flannel.
2. **Massage the Lids:** this is to unblock the glands and to encourage them to release their fatty / infected deposits onto the eye.
3. **Cleaning the Lids:** The lids can then be cleaned with dilute baby shampoo or with dilute bicarbonate of soda. Both made up from boiled water that has been cooled. Some people find Supranettes helpful.
4. **Ointments for the lids:** Chloramphenicol ointment is used at night, if the lids are very inflamed then Betnesol ointment is also used in the morning. Both these ointments are applied with a cotton bud, and rubbed into the base of the eye lashes. The Chloroamphenicol ointment will be prescribed for 3 months and the Betnesol for two weeks.
5. **Drops for the eye:** To stop ocular irritation during the day, we use Celluvisc preservative free drops and Liquifilm preservative free drops.
6. If the eyes are still inflamed your doctor may give you Tetracycline.

What Happens if I don't treat my eye lids?

The eye will continue to be sore and mildly inflamed. Sometimes the glands become blocked and swell up - a so called chalazion. In severe cases these need a drainage operation.



A Chalazion

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