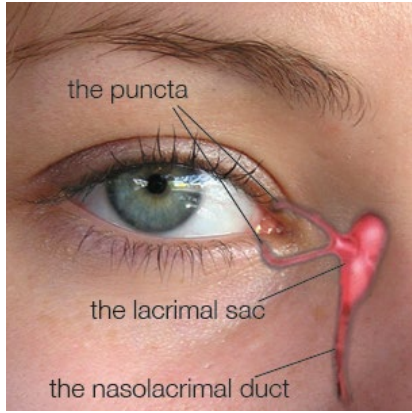


5) Reducing drainage of tears

- Punctal plugs (temporary or permanent)



6) Other medications/therapy

- Omega-3 or Omega-6 fatty acids supplement
- Steroids or ciclosporin eye drops: to control inflammation
- Acupuncture



Clinic Appointments

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LASIK Enquiries

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DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Dry Eye Syndrome



What is Dry Eye Syndrome?

Dry eye syndrome, also known as keratoconjunctivitis sicca, is a very common eye condition.

It occurs when your eyes do not produce enough tears or tears evaporate too quickly. The normal function of tears is to keep the front surface of the eye (cornea) lubricated, protect it from infection and give a better quality of vision. Abnormality of tears can result in symptoms of discomfort, watering as well as visual disturbance.

Symptoms

Dry eye syndrome usually affects both eyes and symptoms may include any of the following:

- Dryness
- Burning, stinging or itching
- Gritty/scratchy feeling
- Irritation from wind or smoke
- Blurred vision
- Tired eyes
- Red eyes
- Excessive tearing/blinking
- Sensitivity to light
- Mucus discharge
- Difficulty wearing contact lenses
- Decreased tolerance with reading or working on computer

Causes

There are a variety of causes which include:

- Ageing
- Hormonal changes: menopause
- Certain eye conditions: blepharitis, incomplete eye closure, eyelid disorders
- Contact lens usage
- Laser refractive surgery: LASIK
- Certain medications: anti-histamines, anti-acne, anti-depressants, decongestants
- Certain medical conditions: diabetes, thyroid disorders, autoimmune diseases such as Sjogren's syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis
- Environmental factors: hot or windy climate, air conditioning, computer usage

Diagnosis

Your eye specialist will perform a comprehensive eye examination with special dye to examine the cornea, to determine the quality and evaporation rate of tears.

He/she may carry out further tests:

- Schirmer's tear test: to measure volume of tears
- Tear analysis: to determine quality of tears

Management

Dry eye syndrome cannot be 'cured'. The aim of treatment is to relieve eye symptoms and to prevent complications such as damage to the corneal surface.

Treat the underlying cause of Dry Eye Syndrome

1) Lifestyle changes:

- Avoid dehydrating environments such as air conditioning
- Wear spectacles or sunglasses outdoors in windy conditions
- Blink more often when reading, watching TV or using computer
- Take regular breaks from computer or mobile devices
- Do not direct fans towards eyes
- Reduce contact lens usage
- Avoid smoking

2) Eyelid hygiene

3) Replacing tears:

- Artificial tear drops (preservative or preservative-free)



- Eye gel or ointment

