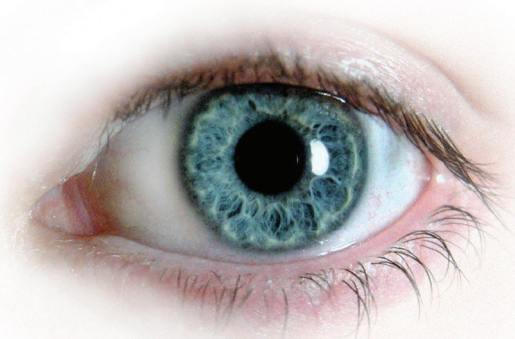


# COMMON EYE SURFACE PROBLEMS

## (Blepharitis, Dry Eye, Subconjunctival Hemorrhage)



Many of our patients complain that their eyes itch, sting, burn, or feel like there is something in them. Many of these symptoms can be understood and treated by following the steps outlined below. Treating any eyelid or dry eye disorder can lower the risk of infection, make your eyes feel more comfortable, and in some cases can help patients see better. **HOWEVER, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CHECK WITH YOUR PRIMARY EYE DOCTOR IF THE STEPS BELOW DO NOT RELIEVE YOUR SYMPTOMS**



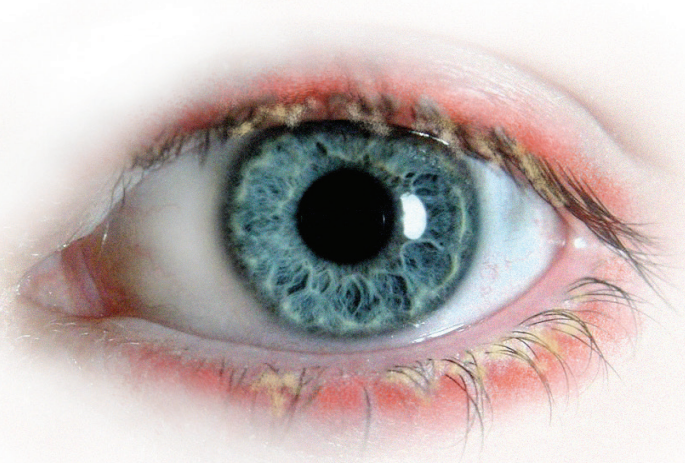
**Normal Eye**

### **Blepharitis**

Blepharitis, a common eye condition, is an inflammation of the eyelids, usually caused by an excess growth of bacteria that is ordinarily found on the skin, blockage of the eyelid's oil glands, and occasionally, allergies. Blepharitis causes the eyelids to be reddened, itchy, and somewhat swollen and scaly-appearing at the base of the eyelashes. As scales become coarser, the surface of the eye becomes irritated and forms crusts, which may cause the lids to stick together when waking up in the morning. The eyes may become dry due to inflammation of moisture-producing tissues and this can cause a gritty sensation as well.

#### **Symptoms of Blepharitis:**

- Feeling a gritty sensation as if something is in your eye
- Burning of the eye
- Sensitivity to light
- Red and swollen eyes or eyelids
- Dry eyes
- Blurry vision
- Crusting of the eyelashes



**Eye with blepharitis**

## **Treatment of Blepharitis**

Blepharitis cannot be cured. However, it can be treated and controlled through proper eyelid hygiene. If you have blepharitis, follow the steps listed below to help treat and cleanse your eye:

- Take a clean washcloth and wet it in very warm water. Wring the washcloth and place it over the closed eyelids for five minutes. Re-wet as necessary to maintain desired temperature. This will help to soften crusts and loosen oily debris.
- Place the warm, wet washcloth over the index finger and apply a diluted solution of half baby shampoo/ half warm water.
- Cleanse one eye at a time, closing the eye you are cleansing, and rub the washcloth or your finger over the eyelashes and lid margins several times using horizontal strokes.
- Rinse thoroughly with a clean, warm, wet washcloth. Pat dry.

## **Dry Eye**

Dry eye is extremely common and usually caused by a decreased production of tears by the lacrimal (tear) glands. Dry eye affects women more frequently than men, especially after menopause.

### **Symptoms of Dry Eye:**

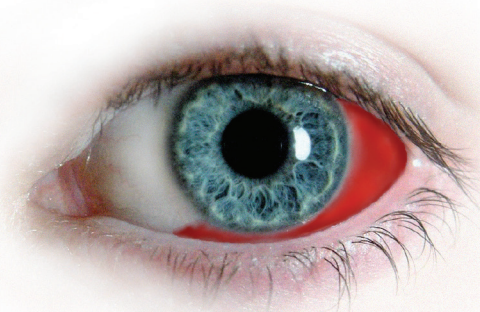
- A stinging, burning, or gritty feeling in the eye
- Excess watering of the eyes, followed by periods of dryness
- Stringy discharge from the eye
- Blurred vision
- Redness of the eye
- Sensitivity to light
- Decreased tolerance of activities requiring prolonged periods of visual attention (such as reading or working on the computer)

### **Treatment of Dry Eye:**

- Use plenty of artificial tears. Over the counter (no prescription necessary) artificial tears can be used frequently throughout the day. There are many brands on the market, so try several to see which one provides the most relief. Make sure that the eyedrops do not contain any allergy treating or "getting the red out" ingredients
- Avoid dry conditions, breaking frequently when performing activities that require prolonged periods of visual attention
- Use a thicker eye lubricating gel or ointment at bedtime

## **Subconjunctival Hemorrhage (SCH)**

Subconjunctival hemorrhage is an accumulation of blood under the membrane that covers the external part of the eye, the conjunctiva. SCH frequently causes alarm for patients as it appears to the patient as if "the eye is bleeding." SCH is common, occurs more frequently in patients taking aspirin, baby aspirin, fish oil, or any other blood thinning medications. SCH is also quite common in patients receiving regular injections of medication into the eye for macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusion, or diabetic retinopathy. SCH is a harmless condition, usually resolves within one to two weeks, and requires no treatment at all.



**Eye with Subconjunctival Hemorrhage (SCH)**