

Blepharitis and Lid hygiene

How do the eyelids work?

The eyelids protect the eye and spread the tears over the surface of the eye to maintain clear vision. Within the eyelids there are many small sebaceous glands called meibomian glands. These produce an oily substance in the tears to slow the rate of tear evaporation.



What is Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is a common inflammatory condition of the edge of the eyelid. It may be associated with some skin conditions, such as very dry or very oily skin, eczema or dermatitis.

What causes Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is caused by particles of dead skin and oil blocking the duct openings on the inner edge of the eyelids. When left untreated, blepharitis can cause meibomian cysts, styes, conjunctivitis and marginal keratitis.

What are the symptoms?

Typical symptoms include irritation, soreness and redness of the eyelids.

How is it treated?

The main course of treatment is regular lid hygiene to reduce the inflammation in the eyelid. This needs to be carried out regularly for the long term to prevent symptoms recurring.

Always wash your hands before and after touching your eyes.

Lid Hygiene

This is performed to remove any debris that has accumulated on the edges of the lids and from between the eye lashes.

- Using a small, clean dish or cup, mix a drop of baby shampoo (or one teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda) with 100mls cooled boiled water.
- Use a cotton bud dipped in the solution above, to clean along the base of the lashes on the upper and lower lids using a side-to-side wiping motion.

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This will remove any crusts and debris from between the lashes of the upper and lower lids. Rinse the lids with clean water and gently dry with a clean towel.

How often will I need to clean my lids?

You will need to repeat the lid cleaning twice daily initially. However as your symptoms resolve, you will be able to do this once daily. As blepharitis is an ongoing condition, lid cleaning will need to be continued.

For any further information, please contact

The Eye Clinic: within the hours of 9.00 – 5.00 Monday to Friday
(tel. 01423 553195 or 01423 553423)

If you require this information in an alternative language or format (such as Braille, audiotape or large print), please ask the staff who are looking after you.