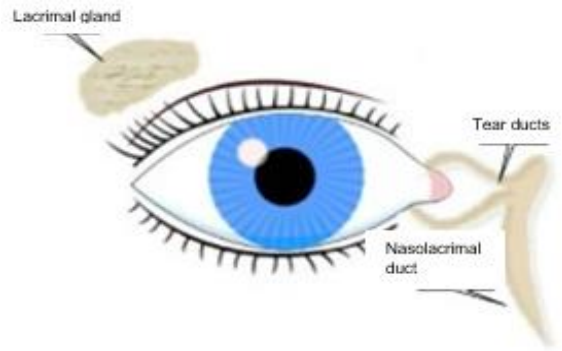
Patientinformation

Information about dry eyes

Eyes that burn, chafe or feels tired can be dry eyes and that is something that the vast majority can experience from time to time. Between 10-15 percent of all people experience discomfort of dry eyes sometimes during life. In some cases these problems may be chronic and also affect the quality of life.

What is tear fluid and tear film?

The tear fluid forms a protective film on the surface of the eye consisting water, salts, fats and proteins. The lacrimal gland, that is placed above the eye in the eye cavity, continuously secretes tear fluid which the eyelids then distribute to a thin film, the so called tear film, all over the eye. This function as a lubricant in the eye, keeps the eye wet between the flashes, protects against infections and gives the eye a smooth surface for best viewing. The tear film is therefore very important for the eye´s function.



Why do we sometimes get dry eyes?

Dry eyes are due to that the tear production is too small. The tear production usually decreases with increasing age and due to hormonal factors women suffers earlier than men. Some medicines including some antidepressants and diuretic drugs can affect tear production. In some diseases such as rheumatic diseases and thyroid gland disorders and allergies, tear production decreases.

The mucous membrane of the eye is affected by our environment and in particular by dry air and strong exposure to sun and wind. Computer work can also cause dry eyes.

Which are the symptoms of dry eyes?

The eyes are often a little red, may feel tired and irritated and you also experience blurred vision. Pain and gravel and agitation are as common. You also become sensitive to strong light (light sensiti-vity). Problems are often aggravated in television viewing, reading or computer word and often increase at the end of the day or after staying in a dry environment.

Sometimes the symptoms are most pronounced on the mornings, you have difficulty opening you eyes or they are clustered. This is because tear production usually reduces in the night-time.

Many people have more trouble in wintertime because the outdoor air is drier then. Eyes that flow can be strangely a symptom of dry eyes when increased amount of tear fluid tries to compensate for a deteriorated tear quality.

What can you do when you have dry eyes

Try to blink frequently, especially when you are reading, working at the computer and watching TV. Try to avoid dry air, high air temperature, smoke and dust. Use sunglasses when staying outdoors. Avoid contact lenses.

If these measures are not enough you can try out a prescription free tear replacemant/drops. The dosage is individual depending on how much trouble you have and varies from a few drops if needed to several times a day for a long time. The difficulty varies over time and you may need to drop in recurring periods.

There are many different lubricating preparations in the form of drops in case of mild distress or gel ointment in more pronounced complaints. Preparations without preservatives should be chosen during long term treatment. It is quite individual which drops suits one and sometimes you have to try out between different varieties.

Tear replacements can be purchased prescription free at the pharmacy or at the optician, where you can also get tips on eye drops to suit your inconveniences.

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