Patientinformation

Blepharitis



Along the eyelid edge there are a large number of small glands. These produce an oil-like component in our tear fluid, which helps to lubricate the eye and keep the tear film even. On the eyelid edge there is also (like on the rest of the body) a normal flora of bacteria. Sometimes the glands can be blocked and bacteria grow in the gland orifice, which causes inflammation and irritation. This is called blepharitis (eyelid inflammation).

Common symptoms of blepharitis are redness and sometimes swelling adjacent to the eyelid edge, tearing, itching, chafing of burning sensation. You can also sometimes notice small scaling particles attached to the eye lashes, which may also feel clustered in the morning. Sometimes the eye white (sclera) becomes easily reddened. These inconveniences may be temporary or more constant. The symptoms is more common in higher ages. People with sensitive and dry skin may also have a higher risk, as well as people with certain skin diseases.

In general, blepharitis is treated by self-care in the form of daily wash and massage of the eyelid edge, which is commonly referred to as ”eyelid hygiene”. The purpose is to keep the gland orifices open and prevent the growth of bacteria. For instructions, see next page.

In case of pronounced symptoms, a temporary cure with antibiotics in combination with cortisone may be considered during the first few weeks, in addition to the above. Your doctor may decide if this is needed in your case. As a supplement moisturizing (tear substitutes) can also be used a few times a day, which is available for purchase without a prescription at the pharmacy.

Eyelid hygiene

Eyelid hygiene should be performed every day in the morning and evening and takes about 5 minutes. Use a clean terry towel, facecloth or compress that is moistened with warm water and preferably a drop of mild, unscented shampoo (for example baby shampoo).

Lay on the bed or in any other comfortable place with the head backwards (faced up) and put the dampened facecloths over both eyes with closed eyelids. Gently massage the eyelids and eyelid edges with the facecloth for 5 minutes. Rinse off any shampoo with water.

If you have been prescribed an eye ointment, this should then be applied to the eye, inside the lower eyelid, twice daily during the first two weeks. Then continue continually with the eyelid hygiene in the morning and evening to keep the eyelid edges healthy and vital and prevent the symptoms from coming back.

When should a doctor be contacted?

- If the eye turns red and is suppurating.
- In case of severe chafing or pain.
- If the vision deteriorates.
- If the symptoms are one-sided.

Contact

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