

Blepharitis and Meibomianitis

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 is Meibomianitis?

Meibomianitis is a mild infection in the glands of your eyelids. There are approximately 100 small glands that run along the top and bottom of your eyelids. These glands produce an oily liquid, which helps make tears. In Meibomianitis these glands swell

What are the symptoms?

Your eyes may feel itchy, sore or gritty. Some patients complain of a tired feeling in the eye especially in the evenings.

How is it treated?

Blepharitis and Meibomianitis can be treated with warm compresses and lid hygiene for as long as you have the symptoms (see below).

Always wash your hands before and after touching your eyes.

1. Warm compress

Either

- A heated eye mask specifically for Meibomianitis can be purchased from your chemist.
- The eye mask can be heated in the microwave to reach the optimum temperature.
- Place the eye mask over your eyes following the manufacturer instructions.

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Or

- Use a clean flannel and dip it into boiled water that has cooled to bearable temperature.
- Put the flannel over your eyelids for 5 minutes and gently massage the eyelids, this helps to reduce the swelling and encourages the glands to drain.
- The flannel will need to be reheated during this period to maintain the optimum temperature.

2. Lid Cleaning

Either

- Boil some water, then let it cool to room temperature
- Pour approximately 100mls of the water into a clean cup
- Clean the eyelids along the eyelashes, morning and evening, using a cotton bud.
- With care make sure you clean the eyelids well with a gentle rubbing action.

OR

- You can buy a Lid Hygiene system from your local chemist. It is easier to use but does cost more, and prices vary.

How often will I need to clean my lids?

Continue with this treatment twice daily for two weeks, then once daily for a further two weeks. After that clean your eyelids two or three times a week to prevent your symptoms returning.

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.