



SHEINKOPF & TOMASIK EYE CARE ASSOCIATES

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Dry Eye Syndrome

You have been diagnosed with dry eye syndrome. This is a fairly common condition, which results from the decreased production or quality of moisture in the eye. Dry eye syndrome can result from a variety of causes including age, systemic medical conditions, the use of certain medications as well as other environmental conditions.

Medications and systemic health conditions can substantially affect dry eyes. Common health conditions such as hypertension, depression, menopause and rheumatoid arthritis as well as medications such as diuretics, anti-hypertensives, anti-depressants and allergy medications can cause a decrease in moisture production and thus dry eyes.

There are also certain environmental conditions that may further irritate dry eyes. These include: pollution, dry heat such as forced hot air or electric heat, the use of fireplaces or wood stoves, dusty or windy conditions, cigarette smoke, computer use or contact lenses.

Symptoms associated with dry eye syndrome may include: burning, feeling of “something in my eye”, red eyes, excessive tearing or blurriness that clears up with blinking. Excess tearing is the result of irritation to the eyes from the lack of sufficient moisture. Unfortunately those flushing tears lack the important nutritional components that keep the ocular tissue healthy and free from irritation.

What can you do?

- ❑ There are many over the counter (OTC) tear substitutes such as: Genteal, Refresh, Systane, Optive, Theratears, Hypotears plus many others. These should be used 3-4 times per day. There are also gels that can be used which may last longer such as Genteal gel or Refresh liquigel.
- ❑ If used frequently (4-6 times per day or more), preservative free tear substitutes such as Genteal, Refresh liquigel, Tears Natural PF etc. are preferred to avoid potential irritation from the preservatives.
- ❑ Watch your intake of common diuretics such as caffeine (coffee, tea, soda etc.), alcohol, OTC cold or allergy medications. Minimize spicy foods, artificial sweeteners, hydrogenated and trans fats, red meats and processed foods.
- ❑ Drink plenty of water (1/2 body weight in ounces H₂O per day).
- ❑ Use room humidifiers or whole house humidifiers.

- ❑ Decrease use of decorative fireplace or wood stove. Avoid smoke and smoking.
- ❑ Wear sunglasses to block wind and UV light.

Are there other optional treatments?

- Refitting of contact lens or discontinue their use entirely.
- Treatment of underlying skin and/ or lid disease, if present.
- Nutritional supplements including Omega 3 fatty acids and flax seed oil.
- Modulate the immune response to reduce inflammation of tear producing glands.

Many tests are performed to determine what is *contributing* to or the cause of your dry eye condition. They may include: biomicroscopy, tear break-up time, lysamine green staining, fluroscein staining, Schirmer test and collagen implant test.

YOUR TREATMENT PLAN:

- ◇ OTC Lubricating eye drops ____/ day
- ◇ OTC Lubricating eye gels ____/day
- ◇ Lid soaks and cleansing
- ◇ OTC Lubricating ointment at bedtime
- ◇ OTC Nutritional supplements
- ◇ Rx Oral Antibiotics for rosacea or lid disease
- ◇ Rx Steroidal or non- steroidal anti- inflammatory drops ____/ day for 1 month.
- ◇ Rx Restasis drops ____/day (maintenance)
- ◇ Punctal Occlusion

Return for re-evaluation: _____

Special instructions: