

How to get relief from Dry Eyes



Ewan Stilwell - Optometrist
dryeyesmelbourne.com.au

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Do you have dry eyes?.....3

What causes dry eyes?.....5

What are the signs of dryness?.....6

Which treatments are best?.....7

How does IPL work?.....9

What happens in an IPL treatment...10

What Next?11

Do you have dry eyes?

Check this list....



- red, sore or gritty eyes
- burning or stinging eyes
- stringy discharge or crusty matter in eyelashes
- blurry vision clearing after several blinks
- sudden excess of tears making the eyes very watery
- tired eyes or difficulty in reading for long
- feeling of heavy eyelids or pressure behind eyes
- repeated styes

● You may have only one of these symptoms or you may have several or even all of them at different times. The more you have, the more serious the problem.

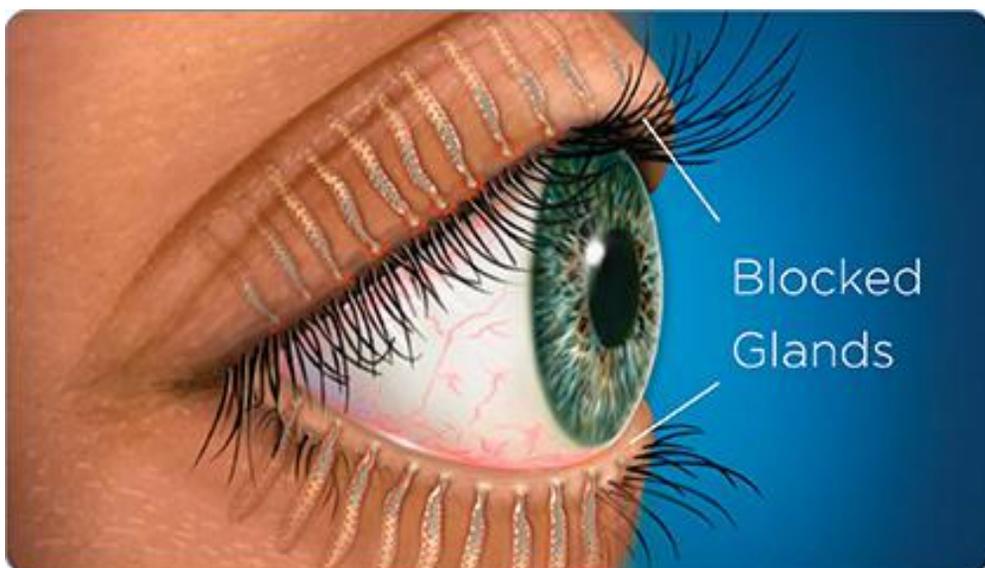
What causes dry eyes?

1. Meibomian Gland dysfunction (85% of dry eyes)

Sufferers from dry eyes are often surprised to learn that most cases of dry eyes result from blockages in eyelid glands that secrete oils (Meibomian glands).

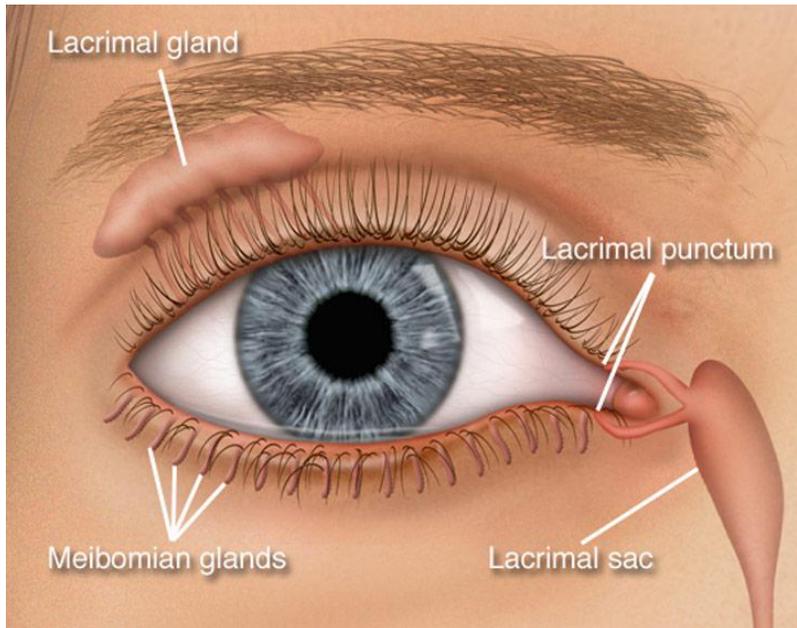
Every time you blink, a small amount of oil is released from these glands on to the watery tear film on the surface of the eyes.

This oil prevents the tears from evaporating quickly and so maintains the comfort and health of the eyes' surface. Dry eyes are caused by insufficient oil which results in inflammation and redness.



What causes dry eyes continued....

2. Aqueous tears deficiency (15% of dry eyes)



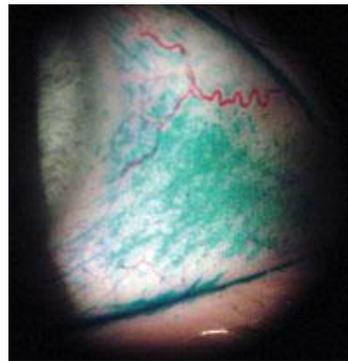
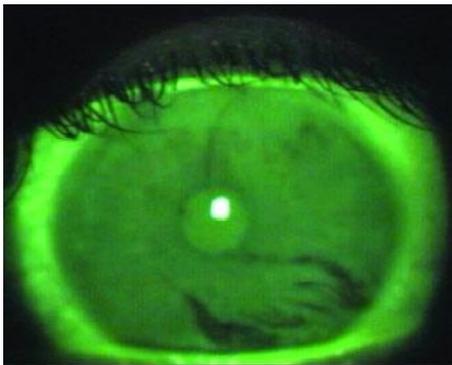
The tear or lacrimal gland produces the watery or aqueous component of our tears.

Aqueous deficiency is much less common than lack of oil and is usually associated with other underlying health problems such as thyroid disease or Sjogren's syndrome.

Certain medications may also reduce aqueous tear production.

What are the signs of dryness?

What does the optometrist see?



Using a slit-lamp microscope, the optometrist may see:

- inflammation of the eyelids and the white of the eye
- blockages of the oil glands along the edge of the eyelids
- crusty matter in the eyelashes (Blepharitis)
- redness on the inner surface of the lower eyelid
- dry areas highlighted after instilling fluorescein or lissamine-green eyedrops., *(see photos above)*

The optometrist may use other instruments and techniques to examine the tears and the surface of the eye and determine which type of dry eyes you have.

● *The more signs visible, the more serious the problem.*

Which treatments are best?

1. LONG TERM RELIEF

IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) is currently the best new technology for treating meibomian gland dysfunction.

It's quick and easy and gives long term relief (see pages 10-11 for more details)

2. SHORT TERM RELIEF

1. Warm compresses

Warmth applied to the lids reduces inflammation, stimulates the meibomian glands and reduces discomfort.



A special eye-mask heated in a microwave oven is placed over the eyes for at least 5 minutes. This needs to be done at least once a day and in more severe cases both morning and night.

2. Manuka honey eye-drops (Optimel Plus)

Optimel drops twice a day reduce inflammation and improve ocular comfort.



3. Lacritec Omega-3 capsules

Omega-3 oils reduce inflammation. Lacritec is specially formulated to reduce ocular surface inflammation.

Which dry eye treatments are best continued....

2. SHORT TERM RELIEF continued

4. Lubricant eyedrops and gels

Lubricant drops instilled in the eyes several times through the day will reduce the discomfort of dry eyes temporarily.

Gels are best for night time use.

It's best to use preservative free drops (single dose) because the preservative ingredient increases inflammation over time.

5. Meibomian gland expression

Gentle squeezing of the meibomian glands (done by the optometrist) can improve the flow of oils.

3. OTHER TREATMENT OPTIONS

Lipiflow

Lipiflow is a new technology which applies warmth to the meibomian glands. It is effective but expensive.

Blephasteam

Blephasteam is a goggle-device that applies moist heat to the meibomian glands. The warm goggle is worn for 10 minutes and often done before meibomian gland expression.



How does IPL work?



Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) has been used for several years to treat skin blemishes. More recently IPL has been found to be an excellent treatment for dry eyes caused by meibomian gland dysfunction.

IPL uses flashes of very bright, concentrated light. The light is flashed just below the eyelids, close to the meibomian glands. The light energy relieves dry eyes for these reasons:

1. IPL heals and liquefies the oil in the meibomian glands which increases oil flow.
2. IPL promotes blood flow in the fine vessels which supply these glands and so improves gland function.
3. IPL increases the production of cells lining the ducts of the glands.
4. IPL eradicates micro-organisms on the eyelid which block the glands openings.
5. IPL reduces inflammation caused by Dry Eyes.

What happens in an IPL treatment?

- You will be seated comfortably and protective goggles placed over your eyes to protect them from the bright light.
- A layer of gel is applied to your upper cheeks below your eyelids.
- The application head of the IPL device is then gently placed against your cheek below your lower eyelid and a flash is applied. The procedure is repeated several times as the IPL head is moved to other positions below the eyelid.
- You will be aware of the flash of light and you will feel a mild 'warmth' below your eyelid but there will be no discomfort or pain.
- The goggles are then removed and the gel wiped off.
- Usually, this is followed by an additional quick procedure to express some oil from the Meibomian eyelid glands. A single drop of local anaesthetic is placed in your eyes and gentle squeezing of the lower lids is performed to express a small quantity of oil.

That's it! IPL is simple, quick and effective.

WHAT NEXT?

Sick and tired of your dry eyes?

Want to stop using so many lubricant eyedrops?

Act now. Call Optical Oasis Mentone on 03 583 0855 to arrange for an assessment consultation and your first IPL treatment.

If you are not be ready to try IPL, you will be advised about which of the other options laid out on pp.7-8 would be best for you.

**Ewan Stilwell Optometrist
59 Florence St
Mentone Vic 3194
Ph 03 9583 0855**

**dryeyessmelbourne.com.au
ewanstilwell.com.au**