

What is Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is a common inflammatory condition that affects the eyelids and can cause the eyes to become dry and irritated.

Normal skin bacteria may build-up at the base of the eyelashes (which may be seen as a crusty discharge along the eyelids) and cause chronic inflammation. Blepharitis is, however, not a true infection and is not contagious. No one is sure what the underlying cause is.

- There probably is a genetic component
- It is more common in people with rosacea (tendency towards flushing) or seborrhea (dandruff)

Signs and Symptoms for Blepharitis

- Chronic eye irritation (burning, stinging)
- Chronic eye dryness & difficulty tolerating contact lenses
- Chronic red or bloodshot eyes
- Chronic redness of the margin of the eyelids
- Eye and eyelid itching
- Crusty discharge, especially in the mornings
- Loss of eyelashes
- Stye formation
- Rarely, inflammation of the cornea

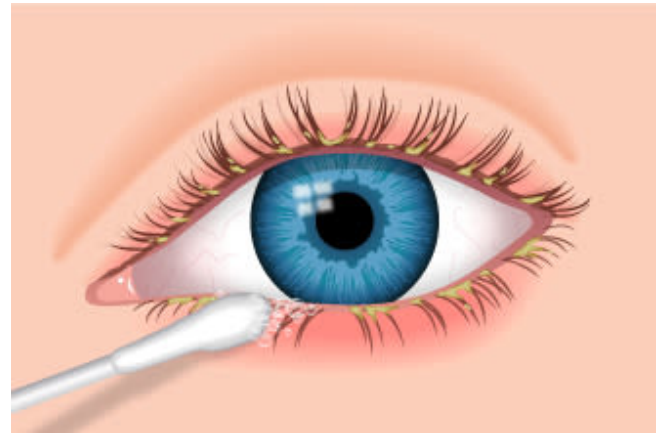


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Treatment Options

Blepharitis is not a dangerous condition and can be well controlled.

- Warm compresses/lid hygiene, serve to open the oil glands, soften the oil, and loosen any crusts along the eyelashes
- Lubricating eye drops keep eyes lubricated
- Fish oil and flaxseed oil supplements, as allowed by your PCP
- Antibiotic eye ointment decreases the overgrowth of bacteria
- Oral antibiotic tablets change the consistency of the oil produced by the oil glands, thereby serving to unclog them
- AzaSite™ changes the consistency of the oil produced by the oil glands, thereby serving to unclog them
- Restasis™ is a prescription medication that reduces inflammation
- Topical antibiotic or antibiotic steroid combination drops reduce inflammation and infection. They are generally used for a short period of time