Blepharitis
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What is blepharitis?
Blepharitis is a chronic inflammation of the eyelids. It is a common problem.

What are the signs and symptoms?
• Irritation or a feeling like there is something in your eye.
• Redness, burning, and itching of your eyelids.
• Eyelid margins are red, with scales and flakes at the base of the lashes.
• In the morning, your eyelids may feel sticky with crusted scales and debris. This is caused by an oily discharge from the eyelid glands.
• If untreated, these glands may become plugged and infected. This may lead to recurring styes, dry eye syndrome, and a loss of lashes.

Normal eye
Eye with blepharitis
How is Blepharitis cured?
Blepharitis is usually a chronic condition. However, early diagnosis, and proper treatment are key to controlling the symptoms and preventing your condition from getting worse.

Eyelid hygiene
Your doctor may recommend one or more of the steps that follow.

☐ Warm compress
This loosens the crust on your eyelids and eyelashes before you clean them. The warmth also can loosen blocked residue in the oil-secreting meibomian glands in your eyelids.

To use a warm compress:
› Wash your hands. Dampen a clean washcloth with warm water.
› Place the washcloth over your closed eyes for 5 minutes, several times a day.
Cleaning the eyelids

This is essential in blepharitis treatment. Your doctor will recommend what cleansing agent to use:

- Warm water only
- Baby shampoo diluted (watered down) with warm water (1:4 dilution)
- Tea tree oil-based cleansers
- Over-the-counter eyelid wipes

To clean the eyelids:

1. Wash your hands, then dip a clean washcloth or gauze pad into your cleaning solution.
2. Squeeze out any extra moisture.
3. Gently wipe across your lashes and lid margins with your eyes closed.
4. Rinse eye area with cool water.
5. Repeat the process for your other eye, using a fresh washcloth or pad.

Wiping eye with pad
Relieving blepharitis symptoms

Because blepharitis and dry eyes commonly happen together, your eye doctor may tell you to use over-the-counter or prescription eye drops to help relieve symptoms.

☐ Moisture drops

› Most patients with dry eye disease need tear supplements. These come in many forms and name brands. They are recommended by your eye doctor based on the thickness of the drops and whether they have preservatives.

› You may need to try different products to find out which one works best for you.

The following products can be purchased over the counter (no prescription necessary):

☐ Artificial tears
☐ Gel drops
☐ Gels
☐ Preservative-free tears

Please speak with your pharmacist about available options.
☐ Dietary supplements
  › A diet rich in omega fatty acids may be helpful. See your pharmacist or health food store if you are interested in taking supplements, such as fish oil, flax seed oil or omega-3 supplements.

☐ Prescription medications
  › Application of an antibiotic ointment to the eyelids.
  › An oral antibiotic pill to help decrease inflammation.

If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.
Looking for more health information? Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources. For more information go to http://library.novascotia.ca

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