

DRY EYE INFORMATION

Dry eye is a condition where the eye lacks sufficient tears to maintain comfort and health. Tears consist of a watery layer and a thin layer of lipids that prevent the eye's surface from drying out. In dry eye syndrome, either there are not enough tears produced to keep the eye moist or tears do not stay on the eyes long enough. This can lead to eye discomfort and damage to the eye's surface over time.

Dry eye can affect anyone, but it becomes more common with age due to reduced tear production. It is especially prevalent in postmenopausal women and individuals with arthritis. Certain medications and health conditions can trigger dry eye, making it challenging for people to wear contact lenses and causing discomfort in air-conditioned settings. While there is no cure for dry eye, its symptoms can be managed to provide relief.

Common Symptoms of Dry Eyes

- stinging or burning sensation
- itchiness
- intermittent blurred vision
- redness
- tired eyes
- mucus around the eyelids
- scratchy, gritty or the sensation of something foreign in the eye (like an eyelash or a grain of sand).

Common Causes

- Contact Lens Wear
- Infrequent or Incomplete Blinking
- Using Screens or Reading for long periods (Compute, Mobile, TV)
- External Irritants e.g., smoke, dust or chemical
- Climate or Weather
- Medications
- Medical Conditions
- Menopause
- Ageing
- After Eye Surgery – Cataract or Laser Eye Procedures

Untreated dry eye syndrome can lead to several complications, including eye discomfort, fluctuations in vision, and potentially severe damage to the cornea, which, in extreme cases, may result in permanent scarring.

Adequate tear production is essential for maintaining eye health, and addressing dry eye symptoms is crucial to prevent these complications.

Dry eye is diagnosed through various tests, Dr Diana Farlow our Dry Eye Specialist can help diagnose and treat dry eye

Common Treatments and Management Strategies

- Blinking more often
- Using Eyedrops, gels or ointments to help lubricate surface of eyes
- Speak to your GP about medications you are taking and their potential side effects
- Speak to your Ophthalmologist or Optometrist about plugs that can be inserted into the tear ducts to help prevent loss of tears
- Speak to your Ophthalmologist or Optometrist about alternative treatment options

Please contact us directly on 02 9635 0663 for general queries - for any urgent or After-hours Emergencies please contact Sydney Eye Hospital 9382 7111 and speak to the eye registrar.