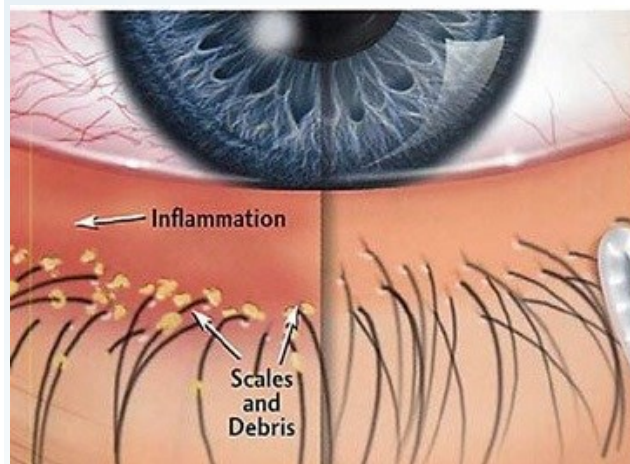


Blepharitis

Blepharitis is a chronic inflammation of the eyelids which causes irritation, itching, and occasionally a red eye. The eyelids are composed of skin on the outside and mucous membranes on the inside. A cartilage-like plate, muscles, and glands are sandwiched in between. Blepharitis can begin in early childhood producing “granulated eyelids,” and may continue throughout life as a chronic condition or it may develop in later life.

SYMPTOMS: May include redness of the eyelid, itching, burning, loss of lashes, crusting, swelling, scales and styes.

POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS: Sometimes the inflammation may spread to the glands of the eyelid, or it may involve the surface of the eye itself, causing the white of the eye to become reddened (conjunctivitis). Often blepharitis is accompanied by an oily discharge which leaves a crusty residue and/or scales on the eyelids. The eyelids may be stuck shut upon awakening in the morning. If the eyelids are not cleaned properly, infectious micro-organisms can grow in the oily debris and buildup, and complications may develop.



Managing Blepharitis

The chronic nature of blepharitis requires long term management of the condition. This includes cleaning the eyelids and lid margin, and maintaining a functional and protected ocular surface to help relieve the symptoms.

Nutrition and Blepharitis

In addition to Lid hygiene as a way to manage blepharitis, a diet rich in Omega 3 fatty acids (which has anti-inflammatory properties) can be helpful in reducing pro-inflammatory conditions that contribute to eyelid inflammation for example Acne Rosacea. Omega 3 rich foods include: Fish oil, Flax seed, salmon, tuna, walnuts, among other sources.

Lid Hygiene

1. **Warm compresses:** Use a clean wash cloth soaked in warm water and hold over closed eyes, along the eyelids for about 15 minutes. Re-warm the cloth as needed.
2. **Prepare the lid wipe:** Open the foil pouch and remove pre-moistened towelette. Wrap the towelette around your index finger for easier control.
3. **Clean the lid:** in front of a well illuminated mirror, scrub the upper and lower lid by rubbing the wipes back and forth along the base of the lashes. Take care not to rub the eyeball. Close the eye and clean the outer lid as well.
4. **Rinse:** the cleansed area thoroughly with clean, warm water and pat the eye dry with a clean towel/cloth.
5. Repeat the process on the other eye

Your doctor may also prescribe other eye medications to treat the inflammation associated with blepharitis. These should be used as directed.

The above hygiene steps should be repeated twice a day for 3 months, and then once a day for on-going maintenance of the blepharitis.