

Dry Eye Disease

About

Dry Eye Disease is a condition in which the eye does not produce tears properly, or when the tears are not of the correct consistency and evaporate too rapidly. If left untreated, this condition can lead to inflammation and pain, ulcers, scarring of the cornea, and some loss of vision.

Dry Eye disease can affect the quality of life of the sufferer; dry eye can make it more difficult to perform some everyday activities, such as using a computer or reading for an extended period of time, and it can also reduce tolerance to dry environments, such as an airplane cabin. There are many factors involved in DED, which is a chronic and progressive disease that produces a range of symptoms and can potentially lead to damaging the eyes.

Symptoms

DED does not present a specific set of symptoms and can affect different people with different symptoms and different levels of severity, but there may be no symptoms present in the early stages of the disease.

- Stinging or burning of the eye
- A sandy or gritty feeling as if something is in the eye
- Episodes of excess tears following very dry eye periods
- A stringy discharge from the eye
- Pain and redness of the eye
- Episodes of blurred vision
- Heavy eyelids
- Inability to cry when emotionally stressed
- Discomfort when wearing contact lenses
- Decreased tolerance of reading, working on the computer; or any activity that requires sustained visual attention



Causes

The precise causes of dry eye are difficult to identify and can include a wide range of possible contributing factors including hormonal changes, ageing, environmental factors (hot dry climate, or lots of reading, computer work when people tend to blink less), certain medications, laser eye surgery, contact lenses, and medical conditions, from allergic conjunctivitis to rheumatoid arthritis.

Treatments

Dry Eye Disease is a chronic condition and so treatment aims to control the disease – there is no cure but treatment can help patients enjoy a better quality of life.

- Eye drops for dry eyes
- Oral medication treatment
- Good eye hygiene
- Dietary supplements
- Minor surgical procedures
- Tear duct plugs
- Intense Pulsed Light Sessions