



Blepharitis

Blepharitis is a common long-term inflammation of the rims of the eyelid. It can cause red, swollen eyelids, itching, burning, stinging, and crusts at the base of the eyelashes.

Blepharitis often recurs and can be due to irritation, allergy or infection.

Blepharitis cannot be cured, but symptoms can be controlled with good eye hygiene. More severe cases of blepharitis may require treatment with antibiotics.

Daily Treatment

- Apply a warm compress (a cloth or cotton wool warmed with hot water) to your closed eyelids for five to ten minutes.
- Gently rub the compress over your closed eyelids for two to three minutes, then repeat. This will help loosen any crusting.
- Use a cloth or cotton bud with warm water and a small amount of **cleaning solution** (see below), and gently rub the edge of your eyelids to clean them. Dry your eyelashes well after treatment.
- Carry out these steps twice a day at first, then once a day when your symptoms have improved.
- Do not wear eye make-up, particularly eyeliner and mascara, as this can make your symptoms worse. If you have to wear eyeliner, make sure that it washes off easily.

Cleaning solution

To clean your eyelids, use one of the following with warm water:

- a small amount of baby shampoo (1 part baby shampoo to 10 parts warm water which has been boiled and then cooled).
- sodium bicarbonate (1 teaspoon dissolved in a cup of water which has been boiled and then cooled).
- a lid-cleaning solution (there are a number of commercial products available, you may need to try more than one product to find one that suits you).

Topical antibiotics

If you have blepharitis that does not respond to regular cleaning, you may be prescribed a course of antibiotic ointments or drops (topical antibiotics). You will need to use these for four to six weeks.

You may be prescribed:

- chloramphenicol eye ointment
- fusidic acid eye drops

The ointment or drops should be rubbed gently onto the edge of your eyelids, up to three times a day, using either clean fingers or a cotton bud. Once your condition begins to respond to the treatment, you will only need to apply the antibiotic once a day