

EXCELLENCE FOR ALL TO SEE SINCE 1985

DRY EYE IN THE HOUSE?

Dry eye is a disease of the tears and eye surface that can have a profound effect on a person's comfort, vision and quality of life. It is associated with either tear deficiency or excessive tear evaporation. Dry eye affects more than 40% of the population and is most commonly found in the elderly, post-menopausal women and those living or working in conditions of low humidity and/or poor air quality. The tear film lubricates the surface of the eye to prevent friction of the eyelids. It also flushes out debris and contains an antibacterial that helps prevent infections. Symptoms of dry eye disease include: grittiness, burning, stinging, light sensitivity and blurred vision - consequently accurate diagnosis and grading of its severity is important in developing an effective treatment plan.

At Holley Optometrists, a 40 minute routine eye examination allows time to conduct a thorough review of our patient's symptoms and medications. The surface of the eye and eyelids are examined under high magnification and appropriate dye tests carried out when necessary. As part of the diagnosis we grade the severity of dry eye, and when appropriate, referral to our Dry Eye Clinic is recommended. The aim of this clinic is to ascertain the cause of this condition and develop appropriate treatment.

We, at Holley Optometrists, believe that patient education is foremost in the management of dry eye disease and compliance with ongoing treatment is paramount to success.

Management of mild dry eye disease may involve one or more of the following:

• **BLINK EXERCISES** - our Dry Eye Clinic often recommends blink exercises in conjunction with other treatments. These exercises not only help overcome a patient's

incomplete lid closure, but also maintain good tear film quality.

• **TEAR SUPPLEMENTATION** - artificial tears, non-preserved artificial tears and lubricating ointments are used to replace the natural tears. There are many products available on the market and our Dry Eye Clinic seeks to match the appropriate artificial tears with the cause of the dry eye.

• **LID DISEASE MANAGEMENT** - blepharitis is an inflammatory lid condition that affects more than 40% of the population and is one of the most common causes of dry eye. Once identified by our eye care professionals, a strict regime of warm compress, lid cleansing and lid massage is adopted. However blepharitis is a chronic condition and therefore ongoing periodic treatment is necessary.

• **DIETARY ADVICE** - Omega-3s in the diet help produce natural anti-inflammatories which are useful in treating dry eye. They are also thought to stimulate tear secretion. The two best sources of Omega-3s are oily cold water fish and flaxseed.

• **REVIEW OF MEDICATION** - if it is suspected that the dry eye is a side effect of a patient's medication, referral to a GP may be appropriate. Examples of medications that can cause dry eye are HRT, antidepressants, betablockers and diuretics.

At Holley Optometrists, we offer the fitting of punctal plugs which are a simple and effective solution to dry eyes that have not responded to the measures described above. This simple and painless procedure, carried out by our experienced eye care professionals, increases the amount of tears by decreasing their outflow.

Please contact our practice
on 028 70342255
to book your full eye examination.

Tear Film

