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Blepharitis

Blepharitis is a very common condition of chronic (long-term) congested oil glands in the margins of the eyelids, where the eye meets the lids. It is most commonly associated with changes in our body hormones seen in middle age, and is often called "Middle Age Acne." It is found in the majority of people with Rosacea, but most people with blepharitis do not have Rosacea. Insufficiently treated, blepharitis can lead to dry eyes, styes, chalazion, and eye infections, with redness, itching, crusting (especially in the morning), burning, sharp pains in the eye(s), reflex tearing, fluctuations in vision, and "tired eyes."

We have about 90 oil glands located near the edge of the eyelids in the skin. The pores (openings) of each gland are located immediately next to the base of the eyelashes. With every blink, the glands get massaged and squirt a thin film of oil (the consistency of canola oil) goes over the top of our tear film. This is like an oil slick over a water puddle, and it helps prevent the tear film from evaporating between blinks. Having congested oil glands (ie Blepharitis) can cause a person to have a clumpy, non-continuous tear film, allowing the tear to evaporate between blinks, which leads to dry eye, reflex tearing, and all the other problems mentioned.

The most important treatment is hot, moist compresses.

- 1. Take a clean, hot, wet washcloth (not used on other parts of your body), and apply it to your gently (not tightly) closed lids for a few minutes. This will soften up the thickened oil deposits that are congesting the pores of the glands.**
- 2. Next, gently scrub the lids in the lash line with the washcloth to work off what you softened up. You may add dilute baby shampoo (1 part shampoo to 9 parts water), OcuSoftPlus pads, or SteriLid to help work off the deposits.**
- 3. Rinse the lids again.**
- 4. Apply medicine if prescribed.**

DO THIS ONE-TO-TWO TIMES DAILY FOR THE FIRST 2 WEEKS. (YOU SHOULD NOTICE A GREAT IMPROVEMENT IN ALL SYMPTOMS BY THEN.) DO THE REGIMEN ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK THEREAFTER TO MAINTAIN IT.

Occasionally, people need oral antibiotics to get the improvement started.