

Patient information factsheet

Dry eyes

Your eyes are protected by a thin film of tears. These tears are produced by your tear glands and are washed over the surface of your eye when you blink. Some people's tear glands produce very few tears or weak tears. This may be due to inflammation and mild redness of their eyelid margins (a condition known as blepharitis). Without enough tears, small patches on the front window of your eye (the cornea) can dry out.

Symptoms

- irritation, grittiness, burning and tiredness in your eyes
- excessive blinking
- watering eyes
- mildly red eyes

Treating dry eyes

If you have dry eyes, please visit your local pharmacist for advice.

Your local pharmacist can give you hypromellose eye drops or clinitas carbomer gel eye drops. Use these eye drops four times a day.

Avoid dry or smoky atmospheres. If your house or office is centrally heated or air-conditioned, make sure the atmosphere does not get too dry.

Contact your GP if:

- your eyes don't improve after two weeks of using eye drops
- your eyes become red
- your eyesight becomes blurred

Your GP can refer you to the eye outpatient or eye casualty department.

Contact lens wearers

If you wear contact lenses and your eyes feel dry, take out your lenses and contact your contact lens supplier for advice. If your eyes are red or watery, contact eye casualty directly on telephone: **023 8120 6592**.

Further information

For further information, please speak to a member of our eye casualty team on telephone: **023 8120 6592**.

Useful links

www.nhs.uk/conditions/Dry-eye-syndrome/Pages/Introduction.aspx

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Contact us

Eye unit
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audiotape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.