

Michael Reynard, M.D.

www.reynardmd.com
1301 – 20th Street #260
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-453-0551

BLEPHARITIS

Blepharitis is a common chronic inflammation of the eyelid margin. It begins early in childhood and frequently continues throughout life. Staphylococcal infection and seborrhea, a common cause of dandruff, are its principal causes.

In blepharitis, matted and crusty material accumulates on the eyelid and eyelashes. The eyelids may become swollen, congested and red. In advanced cases, there may be an associated chalazion (Sty), conjunctivitis (pink eye) or damage to the cornea.

Fortunately, lid hygiene is usually sufficient to control blepharitis and prevent its secondary problems. Warm compresses across both eyes for ten minutes twice a day may provide relief from eye irritation caused by blepharitis. Cleansing the upper and lower eyelids with a gentle shampoo alleviates the crusty debris and excess secretions in blepharitis. Johnson's Baby Shampoo works well but shampoos with a seborrheic cleanser such as Selsun Blue or Head & Shoulders tends to be more effective. The shampoo should be diluted 50/50 with clean tap water. It is important to pull your lower lid down and your upper lid up while cleansing the eyelid margins with a Q-tip. This will help you avoid poking yourself in the eye! Avoid getting shampoo in the eyes. Initially, this should be done three times a day and then tapered according to your symptoms. Eventually, you can get to the point of cleansing your eyelids once every two or three days.

In difficult cases of blepharitis, antibiotics may be used in conjunction with lid hygiene. This may be useful to eradicate infection from the eyelid margins and eyelash follicles. It is important to understand that blepharitis is often a longstanding problem that requires persistent treatment for adequate control.

THIS INFORMATION IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT MEANT AS MEDICAL ADVISE AND SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR DIAGNOSIS OR AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR SEEKING MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR TREATMENT OR CARE. WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONSULT WITH A QUALIFIED PHYSICIAN FOR GUIDANCE CONCERNING YOUR SPECIFIC SITUATION.