



Dry Eye Information Sheet

What is Dry Eye?

Dry eye happens when your eyes do not make enough tears, or the tears do not work properly. This can make your eyes feel uncomfortable, overly dry or watery, or affect your vision. It is a very common condition, especially as people get older.

What Are the Symptoms?

You may notice:

- A dry, gritty, or scratchy feeling in your eyes
- Burning, stinging, or tired eyes
- Blurry vision
- Feeling like something is in your eye
- Watery eyes (your eyes may make extra tears to try to fix the dryness)
- Sensitivity to light

What Causes It?

Dry eye can be caused by:

- Aging
- Hormone changes (like menopause)
- Certain medications
- Contact lens use
- Eye surgery (like LASIK or cataract surgery)
- Certain medical conditions

The symptoms of dry eye can be made worse by:

- Wind, dry air, or heating/air conditioning
- Activities where you blink less (like reading or using a screen)



How Is It Diagnosed?

Your eye doctor will examine your eyes and ask about your symptoms. Your doctor may perform special tests to check your eyes.

How Is It Treated?

There are many ways to manage dry eye. Your doctor may recommend:

- Artificial tears (over-the-counter lubricating eye drops)
- Prescription eye drops to reduce inflammation or help make more tears
- Warm compresses or eyelid cleaning
- Omega-3 supplements
- Changing your environment (like using a humidifier in the winter)
- Taking breaks while reading or using screens
- Special procedures to help keep tears on the eye longer

Living with Dry Eye

- Use your eye drops as prescribed
- Take breaks to blink when reading or using screens
- Avoid direct fans, smoke, or dry environments
- Wear glasses indoors and outdoors to help block air or wind from your eyes
- Let your doctor know if symptoms do not improve

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will dry eye damage my eyes?

A: Most cases are not harmful long term, but untreated dry eye can sometimes cause irritation or damage the surface of the eye.

Q: Can dry eye be cured?

A: Dry eye is usually a long-term condition, but with the right treatment, most people can manage it well and feel comfortable.

This document was reviewed by Dr. Steve Arshinoff.