

# Blepharitis



Blepharitis is a chronic or long-term inflammation of the eyelids and eyelashes. It affects people of all ages. Among the most common causes of blepharitis are poor eyelid hygiene; excessive oil produced by the glands in the eyelid; a bacterial infection (often staphylococcal); or an allergic reaction.

Seborrheic blepharitis is often associated with dandruff of the scalp or skin conditions like acne. It can appear as greasy flakes or scales around the base of the eyelashes and a mild redness of the eyelid. It may also result in a roughness of the normally smooth tissue that lines the inside of the eyelid.

Ulcerative blepharitis is less common, but more serious. It is characterized by matted, hard crusts around the eyelashes, which when removed, leave small sores that ooze or bleed. There may also be a loss of eyelashes, distortion of the front edges of the eyelids and chronic tearing. In severe cases, the cornea, the transparent front covering of the eyeball, may also become inflamed.

In many cases, good eyelid hygiene and a regular cleaning routine may control blepharitis. This includes frequent scalp and face washing; warm soaks of the eyelids; and eyelid scrubs. In cases where bacterial infection is a cause, eyelid hygiene may be combined with various antibiotics and other medications. Eyelid hygiene is especially important upon awakening because debris can build up during sleep.

If you experience symptoms of blepharitis, Dr. Cottone can determine the cause and recommend the right combination of treatments specifically for you.

## Directions For A Warm Soak Of The Eyelids

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. Moisten a clean washcloth with warm water.
3. Close eyes and place washcloth on eyelids for about 5 minutes.
4. Repeat several times daily.

## Directions For An Eyelid Scrub

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. Mix warm water and a small amount of shampoo that does not irritate the eye (baby shampoo) or use a commercially prepared lid scrub solution recommended by your optometrist.
3. Close one eye and using a clean wash cloth (a different one for each eye), rub the solution back and forth across the eyelashes and the edge of the eyelid.
4. Rinse with clear, cool water.
5. Repeat with the other eye.

