

Blepharitis

Summary

Blepharitis is eyelid inflammation and clogged oil glands caused by environmental debris, normal bacteria, and oily flakes at the base of your eyelashes. It causes swollen, red and sore eyelids and can have symptoms of dry eyes. Warm compresses and lid scrubs help loosen the flakes, debris, and help keep nearby oil glands from clogging. Sometimes antibiotic ointment or eyedrops may be used. Blepharitis is an **ongoing (chronic) condition**. You can keep its symptoms under control by keeping your skin, hair and eyelids clean every day.

What is blepharitis?

Blepharitis is inflammation of the eyelids. They may appear red, swollen, or feel like they are burning or sore. You may have flakes or oily particles (crusts) wrapped at the base of your eyelashes too. Blepharitis is very common, especially among people who have oily skin, dandruff or rosacea.

What causes blepharitis?

Everyone has some bacteria on their skin. Some people, however, have more bacteria at the base of their eyelashes than other people. This can cause dandruff-like flakes to form. Also, some people have problems with oil glands in their eyelids, leading to blepharitis.

How is blepharitis treated?

- Unfortunately there is not a cure for blepharitis, but there are a number of things you can do to help control the symptoms.
- Treatment includes warm compresses, eyelid scrubs, antibiotics, artificial tears or steroid drops which are discussed in a separate educational handout.
- Skin and eyelid hygiene. It is very important to keep your eyelids, skin and hair clean. This keeps your blepharitis symptoms under control. Carefully wash your eyelashes every day with baby shampoo.