

Blepharitis

Important information for patients

Other treatments may be suggested by your health care professional. These include:

- Antibiotic eye ointment or drops
- Oral antibiotics
- Ocular lubricants
- Steroid eye treatments; drops or ointment.

If you are having ongoing problems, please see your GP first for advice and treatment and they may refer you to the Eye Care Centre at Leighton Hospital if they consider this necessary.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.

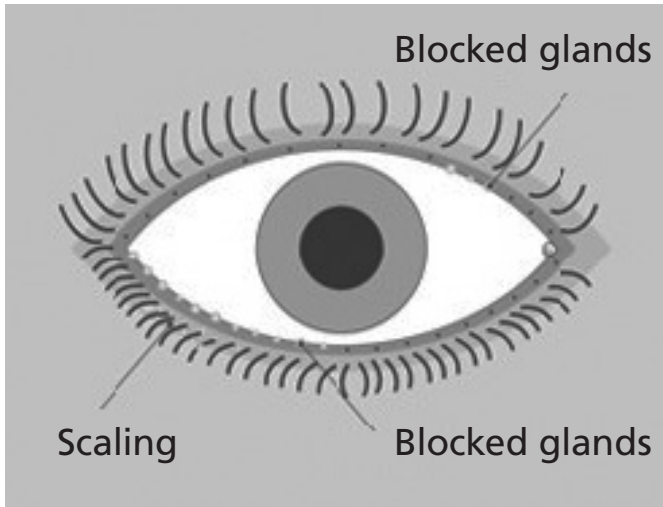
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Reviewed by Readers' Panel
March 2017



What is Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is an inflammation of the eyelids. It can often be chronic. It can affect the areas where the eyelashes grow and the Meibomian glands along the lid margin. This can affect both upper and lower eyelids.



What are the symptoms?

- Red eyelids and crusty eyelashes
- Irritated and itchy eyes
- Burning, stinging or soreness in the eyes
- Foreign body sensation
- Many people with Blepharitis make fewer tears than normal and may have dry eyes
- Styes

- Puffy eyelids
- Eyelids sticking together
- In severe cases, the lashes may fall out.

What causes Blepharitis?

There are two types of blepharitis.

- **Anterior Blepharitis:** This affects the outer edge of the lid and the lashes. It is often caused by Staphylococcus bacteria
- **Posterior Blepharitis:** The glands malfunction and can also become blocked.

Blepharitis is more common in people over 50 but it can develop at any age. As you get older the glands in your eyelids, which secrete part of your tears, become blocked more easily.

You may also get blepharitis as a complication of **Seborrheic Dermatitis**. This makes your skin inflamed or flaky. It can also involve the scalp (when it is called dandruff), lashes, ears and eyebrows. Seborrheic Dermatitis can cause both anterior and posterior blepharitis.

Acne Rosacea can also cause blockages in the Meibomian glands. If too much oily substance is being

produced, this may be caused by Seborrheic Dermatitis.

Mixed blepharitis, which is the most common, is caused by a combination of both anterior and posterior Blepharitis. Blepharitis isn't contagious.

What is the treatment?

Warm compress: a clean flannel soaked in hot (not boiling) water and squeezed out, put on to closed eyes for 10 minutes at a time. Do not let it go cold, keep reheating as instructed. This will soften the crusts on the lashes and help unblock the glands.

Gently massage your eyelids, to push the oils out of the glands

Pour some cooled boiled water in a small bowl.

Use a clean flannel wrapped around your finger, or a cotton bud instead of a flannel, as shown above. Use a separate cotton bud/flannel for each eye.

Scrub along the eyelash edge, top lid, then bottom lid. Repeat this for the other eye. We recommend doing this twice a day.