

Blepharitis

What is blepharitis?

Blepharitis is an inflammation of the eyelids and eyelid margins that is typically caused by an overgrowth of bacteria that are normally found on the skin. It is occasionally caused by rosacea or allergies.

Blepharitis is a very common eye condition that causes the eyelids to become red, itchy and sometimes slightly swollen and scaly appearing at the base of the eyelashes. These scales may cause the lids to stick together when you wake up in the morning. If this crust falls into your eye, you may experience a gritty sensation or feel that you have something in your eye.

How is Blepharitis treated?

Blepharitis cannot be cured; however, it can be treated and controlled through proper eyelid hygiene. Left untreated, you will continue to experience the symptoms above.

If you have been diagnosed with blepharitis, follow the instructions below to help treat and control your condition:

Wet a clean washcloth with very warm water. Wring the washcloth and place it over the closed eyelids for five minutes. Re-wet as needed to keep the washcloth very warm. This will help to soften crusty material and loosen oily debris.

Place the warm, wet washcloth over the index finger and dip in a diluted solution of 50 percent baby shampoo or mild soap.

Cleanse one eye at a time, closing the eye you are cleansing, and rubbing the washcloth or your finger over the eyelashes and lid margins several times using horizontal strokes.

Rinse thoroughly and pat dry. If you have been told to use artificial tears or other medications, this is an ideal time to use them.

In the early stages of treating blepharitis, avoid the use of any eye makeup to reduce irritation. Once symptoms have improved and you begin using makeup again, replace any liquid products immediately because old products are likely contaminated. Make sure to replace these products every 3-6 months and consider using hypo-allergenic products.