

Dry Eye

What is dry eye?

- Dry eye is a condition where the eyes do not produce enough tears.
- Tears keep the eye moist and stop the surface of the eye from drying out. When someone has dry eye, they either do not have enough tears to keep the surface of the eye moist or the tears do not stay on the eyes long enough.

What causes dry eye?

There are many things that can cause or lead to dry eye, such as:

- Aging
- Menopause
- Health problems, such as arthritis
- Taking certain medicines, such as birth control pills, diuretics (water pills) and antidepressants
- Being in climates with dry air and wind
- Eye irritants, such as cigarette smoke, dust, or chemicals
- Trauma to the eye
- Not blinking often enough or fully
- Spending long periods of time in front of a computer screen
- Laser or cataract surgery

Who can get dry eye?

- Anyone can get dry eye, but it is more common to get as we age. As we get older, we produce a smaller amount of tears.
- Dry eye is very common in women who have gone through menopause and people who have arthritis.



What are the symptoms?

Some symptoms of dry eye include:

- Stinging or burning of the eyes
- Itchy eyes
- Blurred eyesight from time to time
- Tired eyes (where you feel like you need to close your eyes)
- Redness
- Mucus around the eyelids, especially after waking up
- A feeling that you have something in your eye, such as an eyelash
- Blepharitis (swelling of the eyelids)

What happens if dry eye is left untreated?

If dry eye is left untreated, it can lead to more health problems with the eyes, such as:

- Eye discomfort
- Changes in eyesight
- Damage to the surface of the eye, which can sometimes lead to scarring

How is dry eye diagnosed?

There are many different types of tests that your eye doctor can do to find out if you have dry eye:

- These tests may include your doctor using a special microscope to look at the surface of your eye. Your doctor may also put drops of yellow dye into your eyes to get a closer look at how your eyes produce tears.

What is the treatment for dry eye?

While there is no cure for dry eye, its symptoms can be treated.

- Some treatments for dry eye include using eyedrops, gels, or ointments, sometimes known as “artificial tears”.
- Some medicines can cause dry eye. Talk with your doctor about the side effects of the medicines you take.



Talk with your CHN eye doctor if you have more questions!