Risk Factors for Developing Dry Eyes
There Are Millions of People at Risk For Dry Eye

Who Is Likely to Develop This Irritating Condition?

Dry eye can be a temporary or chronic condition and occurs when the eye does not produce tears properly, or when the tears are not of the correct consistency and evaporate too quickly. In addition, inflammation of the surface of the eye may occur along with dry eye. If left untreated, this condition can lead to pain, ulcers, or scars on the cornea and, some possible loss of vision, although this is rare.

Elderly people frequently experience dryness of the eyes, but dry eye can occur at any age. Nearly five million Americans 50 years of age and older are estimated to have dry eye.

Of these, more than three million are women and more than one and a half million are men. Tens of millions more have less severe symptoms. Dry eye is more common after menopause. Women who experience menopause prematurely are more likely to have eye surface damage from dry eye.
Do You Know Your Personal Risk Factors for Dry Eye?
See if You Fall Under any of These Categories:

- Taking medications such as antihistamines, nasal decongestants, tranquilizers, certain blood pressure medicines, Parkinson's medications, birth control pills and anti-depressants can increase your risk.

- Skin disease on or around the eyelids can result in dry eye.

- Diseases of the glands in the eyelids can cause dry eye.

- Dry eye can occur in women who are pregnant.

- Women who are on hormone replacement therapy may experience dry eye symptoms. Women taking estrogen are 70 percent more likely to experience dry eye, while those taking estrogen and progesterone have a 30 percent increased risk of developing dry eye.

- Dry eye can occur after LASIK surgery. These symptoms generally last three to six months, but may last longer in some cases.

- Dry eye can result from chemical and thermal burns that scar the membrane lining the eyelids and covering the eye.

- Allergies are often associated with dry eye.

- Staring at computer or video screens without blinking enough can lead to dry eye.

- Incorrect does of vitamins – too little or too much can result in dry eye.

- Homeopathic remedies may have an adverse impact on a dry eye condition.

- Loss of sensation in the cornea from long-term contact lens wear can lead to dry eye.

- Dry eye can be associated with immune system disorders such as Sjögren's syndrome, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis.

- Dry eye can be a symptom of chronic inflammation of the conjunctiva, the membrane lining the eyelid and covering the front part of the eye, or the lacrimal gland. Chronic conjunctivitis can be caused by certain eye diseases, infection, and exposure to irritants such as chemical fumes and tobacco smoke, or drafts from air conditioning or heating.
Dry eye can result if the surface area of the eye is increased, as in thyroid disease when the eye protrudes forward or after cosmetic surgery, if the eyelids are opened too widely.

Dry eye may occur from exposure keratitis, in which the eyelids do not close completely during sleep.

So Now You Know Your Risks, But… What Are the Symptoms to Watch Out For?

- Stinging or burning of the eye
- A sandy or gritty feeling as if something is in the eye
- Episodes of excess tears following very dry eye periods
- A stringy discharge from the eye
- Pain and redness of the eye
- Episodes of blurred vision
- Heavy eyelids
- Inability to cry when emotionally stressed
- Uncomfortable contact lenses
- Decreased tolerance of reading, working on the computer, or any activity that requires sustained visual attention
- Eye fatigue
Living With Dry Eye

Dry eye seldom leads to blindness; however, the condition causes lots of suffering and a diminished quality of life. It can also impair functional visual acuity, leading to a decreased ability to read and to drive, especially at night. Furthermore, it increases the risk of eye infection. As is the case with other diseases involving chronic pain, the constant pain of severe dry eye syndrome sometimes results in poorer psychological health.

When Is It Time to See Your Eye Doctor?

If symptoms of dry eye persist, consult an eye care professional to get an accurate diagnosis of the condition and begin treatment to avoid permanent damage.

At Florida Eye We’ll Help You Say Bye Bye to Dry Eye!!

At Florida Eye, your ophthalmologist will administer several tests to determine if you have dry eye. Sometimes tests that measure tear production are necessary. The Schirmer tear test measures tear production by placing filter-paper strips between your eyeball and your lower lid. Your ophthalmologist might also test you for dry eye using diagnostic drops to check for patterns of dryness on the eye’s surface.

Treatments for dry eye include eyedrops called artificial tears to lubricate the eyes and help maintain moisture. Your ophthalmologist may conserve your tears by closing the channels through which your tears drain. You can also try to prevent tears from evaporating by avoiding wind and dry air from overheated rooms and hair dryers. Smoking irritates dry eyes and should be avoided.
Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute offers a full range of total eye care, including routine examinations, pediatric eye care, dry eye, advanced corneal, retinal and cataract procedures, laser treatments, glaucoma, diabetic procedures and various other sophisticated treatments. With its own pediatric wing and fully accredited outpatient surgical center in Boynton Beach, the Institute also has offices in Wellington, Boca Raton and Juno Beach.

Florida Eye enjoys a reputation as the premier center for clinical trials of breakthrough therapies nationwide. At any given time we are conducting studies in a variety of conditions such as Wet and Dry AMD and Diabetic Retinopathy. For information on current or future studies contact Margo Dague, our study coordinator, at (561) 736-5055 or via email at margo@fleyedocs.com. You can also visit our site at fleyedocs.com.