

MEDICAL



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Symptoms

Dry Eye Syndrome

Dry eye syndrome is one of the most common problems treated by eye physicians. Over ten million Americans suffer from dry eyes. It is usually caused by a problem with the quality of the tear film that lubricates the eyes. Tears are comprised of three layers. The mucus layer coats the cornea, which is the eye's clear outer window. This forms a foundation so the tear film can adhere to the eye. The middle aqueous layer provides moisture and supplies oxygen and other important nutrients to the cornea. This layer is made of 98 percent water along with small amounts of salt, proteins and other compounds.

The outer lipid layer is an oily film that seals the tear film on the eye and helps to prevent evaporation. Tears are formed in several glands around the eye. The water layer is produced in the lacrimal gland, located under the upper eyelid. Several smaller glands in the lids make the oil and mucus layers. With each blink, the eyelids spread the tears over the eye. Excess tears flow into two tiny drainage ducts in the corner of the eye by the nose. These ducts lead to tiny canals that connect to the nasal passage. The connection between the tear ducts and the nasal passage is the reason that crying causes a runny nose.

In addition to lubricating the eye, tears are also produced as a reflex response to outside stimulus such as an injury or emotion. However, reflex tears do little to soothe a dry eye, which is why someone with watery eyes may still complain of irritation.

Dry eye syndrome has many causes.

One of the most common reasons for dryness is simply the normal aging process. As we grow older, our bodies produce less oil - 60% less at age 65 than at age 18. This is more pronounced in women, who tend to have drier skin than men. The oil deficiency also affects the tear film. Without as much oil to seal the watery layer, the tear film evaporates much faster, leaving dry areas on the cornea.

Many other factors, such as hot, dry or windy climates, high altitudes, air-conditioning and cigarette smoke also cause dry eyes.

Many people also find their eyes become irritated when reading or working on a computer. Stopping periodically to rest and blink keeps the eyes more comfortable.

Contact lens wearers may also suffer from dryness because the contacts absorb the tear film, causing proteins to form on the surface of the lens. Certain medications, thyroid conditions, vitamin A deficiency, and diseases such as Parkinson's and Sjogren's can also cause dryness. Women frequently experience problems with dry eyes as they enter

Symptoms of dry eye consist of:-

- Itching,
- burning,
- irritation,
- redness,
- blurred vision that improves with blinking,
- excessive tearing,
- increased discomfort after periods of reading,
- watching TV or working on a computer.

Detection and Diagnosis

There are several methods to test for dry eyes. The doctor will first determine the underlying cause by measuring the production, evaporation rate and quality of the tear film. Special drops that highlight problems that would be otherwise invisible are particularly helpful to diagnose the presence and extent of the dryness.

Treatment

When it comes to treating dry eyes, everyone's needs are a little different.

-Many find relief simply from using artificial tears on a regular basis. Some of these products are watery and alleviate the symptoms temporarily; others are thicker and adhere to the eye longer.

-Preservative-free tears are recommended because they are the most soothing and have fewer additives that could potentially irritate.

-Avoid products that whiten the eyes - they don't have adequate lubricating qualities and often make the problem worse.

-Closing the opening of the tear drain in the eyelid with special inserts called punctal plugs is another option. This works like closing a sink drain with a stopper. These special plugs trap the tears on the eye, keeping it moist. This may be done on a temporary basis with a dissolvable collagen plug, or permanently with a silicone plug.

-There are also simple lifestyle changes that can significantly improve irritation from dry eyes. For example, drinking eight to ten glasses of water each day keeps the body hydrated and flushes impurities.

-Make a conscious effort to blink frequently especially when reading or watching television.

-Avoid rubbing the eyes. This only worsens the irritation.

Treating dry eye problems is important not only for comfort, but also for the health of the cornea.

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menopause because of hormonal changes.

PROJECT HOPE TO LEAD FIRST-EVER, LARGE-SCALE DIABETES EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVE IN INDIA

MILLWOOD, VA - The India Diabetes Educator Project, the first large-scale initiative to train and educate health care professionals in India about the disease, was announced by Project HOPE, an international health education and humanitarian assistance organization, and its corporate partners, BD, Eli Lilly and Company, and Bayer Diabetes Care.

The four-year, multi-million dollar collaborative program is designed to help health care workers in India reduce morbidity and mortality related to diabetes and to combat the rapidly growing threat of diabetes there.

With an estimated 40.9 million people currently living with the condition, India leads the world in the prevalence of diabetes.

The India Diabetes Educator Project offers a comprehensive and sustainable approach that will provide diabetes training to more than 5,000 health care professionals, including nurses, dietitians and nutritionists in India. The project includes mentoring support for newly trained Diabetes Educators and also addresses the role of the educator in empowering the patient to take responsibility for daily self-care and to help prevent the onset of diabetes among those at-risk.

The training will be based on the International Curriculum for Diabetes Health Professional Education developed by the International Federation Consultative Section on Diabetes Education (IDF-DECS) curriculum, adapted for use in India.

"India is at the forefront of the growing global diabetes epidemic and is in urgent need of

trained Diabetes Educators," said John P. Howe III, M.D., President and CEO of Project HOPE.

In India's urban areas approximately 12 percent of adults live with diabetes, compared to only seven percent in the United States (CDC data, 2005) and the United Kingdom. Additionally, research has identified a genetic factor that predisposes Indians to the development of diabetes.

Inadequate control of diabetes can be associated with serious medical complications, including blindness, stroke, heart disease and kidney failure. In fact, diabetes is the second most common cause of blindness in India, surpassed only by cataracts.

The skills, resources and experience of Project HOPE and partners, combined with the expertise of the IDF-DECS curriculum, will work to tackle the challenges of diabetes education, prevention and treatment in India.

"Success in treating diabetes will not come from pharmaceutical interventions alone," said Lorenzo Tallarigo, M.D., President of International Operations, Eli Lilly and Company. "We believe that Project HOPE and The India Diabetes Educator Project will have a positive impact in helping health care professionals meet the current and future patient needs in India."

"As World Diabetes Day approaches, it is important to recognize the health education needs of countries such as India," said Sandra Peterson, President, Bayer Diabetes Care. "With access to standardized diabetes education, health care professionals in India can help empower patients to manage their disease and help prevent long-term complications."

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