

Blepharitis

What is Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is a common condition that causes inflammation (irritation) of the eyelids, leading to red rimmed, sore eyes, sometimes with crusting at the roots of the eyelashes. It is extremely common, responds well to simple treatment and, for most people, it is not harmful. Symptoms include red and sore eyelids, tiny flake like dandruff at the bottom of the eyelashes, dry or burning eyes and sometimes blurring of the vision. You might also have the feeling that there is something in your eye.

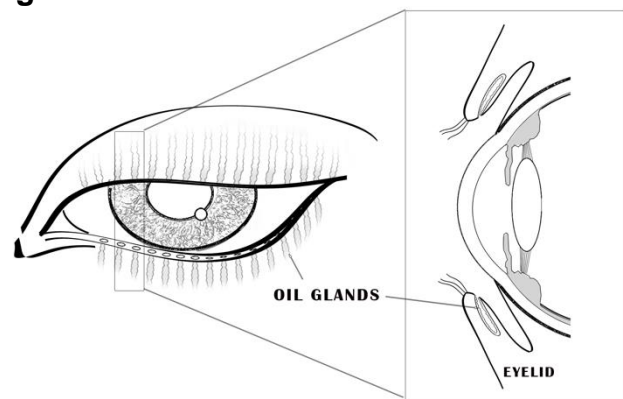
What causes Blepharitis?

There is no direct cause of blepharitis but it is more common in people who have skin conditions such as eczema and acne, and in those with allergic diseases like asthma. Eyelids contain tiny glands that make an oil which keeps the eyes moist as part of the tear film (see figure 1)

In Blepharitis, these glands become blocked, which causes irritated eyelids and dry, sore eyes. It is thought that in some people, blepharitis is partly caused by sensitivity to the bacteria

(staphylococcus) which normally live on the skin.

Figure 1



Treatment with lid hygiene

There is no cure for blepharitis but symptoms can be managed. The most important treatment is good eye care, known as “lid hygiene” and this should be done twice daily with clean hands. This includes even when the symptoms are not there, to reduce the severity and frequency of the symptoms.

The aim of lid hygiene treatment is to encourage healthy tears to lubricate the eye and reduce inflammation. This is achieved by softening the oils in the eyelid glands, unblocking the glands and removing any flakes or excess bacteria.

When to seek further advice

Please seek advice if your eye becomes increasingly red or painful, your sight becomes more blurred or you develop very noticeable and spreading redness together with a lot of eyelid swelling.

You can attend your local A&E department, or see a MECS (Minor Eye Conditions Service) or Community Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES) optician if this service is available.

If you live locally to Moorfields you can:

- 1) Call Moorfields Direct for advice (see details below)
- 2) Attend Moorfields A&E department in City Road

This is a 24 hour service for eye emergencies only. Following triage, you may be seen on the day or informed that no treatment is needed at the service and advised to see your GP or optician.

Alternatively, you may be booked into an urgent care clinic at City Road for a different day.

Author: Su-yin Koay, Emily Cabourne
Illustrator: Caroline Kilduff
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Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
City Road, London EC1V 2PD
Phone: 020 7253 3411
www.moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields Direct telephone helpline

Phone: 020 7566 2345
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm
Saturday, 9am-5pm

Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325

Email: moorfields.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, except bank holidays

Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right. For more information about your rights and responsibilities, please visit the Moorfields website and search '[Referrals to treatment \(RTT\)](#)'. To learn more about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs