

BLEPHARITIS



Blepharitis is a long-term inflammation of the borders of the eyelids. It is commonly associated with a pink or red eyelid margin, along with scaly skin at the base of the eyelashes and even dandruff flakes on the lashes. In some cases of blepharitis, the oils of the eyelid margins are thick. Any of these factors can lead to minor bacterial infections of the eyelids or eyes, dry and irritated eyes, and mucous or crusty eyelids.

Blepharitis is commonly managed by simple cleaning techniques. The use of a mild shampoo like baby shampoo, rubbed carefully along the eyelash areas, can clean the area and reduce symptoms. In some cases, the eye doctor can prescribe ointments or eyedrops to reduce the risk of infection and inflammation.

A chalazion is a blockage of oil flow out of one of the oil glands in the eyelid. The eyelid often shows a non-tender bump that grows over time. These oil entrapments can be treated by applying pressure with a warm cloth, as well as with oral antibiotic medication that reduces oil production. In some cases, a chalazion must be excised through an in-office surgical procedure.

Styes occur when the eyelid oil glands become infected. The medical term for a sty is a hordeolum, and it can appear like a pimple at the base of an eyelash, called an external hordeolum, or a large eyelid cyst that is red, inflamed, and tender called an internal hordeolum. These infected glands should not be drained by pressing or squeezing them, but instead should be examined by an eye doctor who will prescribe the proper oral or eye medications to reduce the infection.

Eyelid conditions should be carefully examined by an eye doctor to reduce the risk of scarring of the eyelid margin, which can cause the eyelashes to be turned outward from, or inward to, the eye.

Please make time to have a complete eye and vision examination annually.