What Is Dry Eye?

Your tears function to protect the eyes and keep them lubricated and comfortable. Dry eye is a disease process resulting in the decline of the quantity and/or quality of the tears produced. It is caused when the tear glands do not produce enough tears, or they don't produce the right kind of tears. This phenomenon causes irritation, scratchiness, burning, redness, and discomfort. Dry eye is the most common of all eye disorders, affecting approximately 5%-35% of the world population, depending on age and geography.[1]

The Complexity Of Tears

Your eyes are moistened by two different types of tears: lubricating tears and reflex tears. Lubricating tears are produced continuously to moisturize the eye and contain natural infection-fighting enzymes. Reflex tears are produced in response to sudden irritation (smoke, onions, foreign particles), injury, or emotion. Ironically, the irritation from dry eyes can trigger reflex tears, which flood the eye. But because reflex tears do not have the proper lubricating composition, the discomfort persists. Thus, "watery eyes" can actually be a symptom of dry eye.

Why Ask for the Parasol® Punctal Occluder?

The parasol punctal occluder is a leader in dry eye treatment because its unique patented design allows for easy, painless insertion and a comfortable, worry-free fit. Our excellent retention rate means the parasol is designed to stay put and get right to work on easing your dry eye symptoms.

You Don't Have To Suffer Any Longer

What Are Punctal Occluders?

As the name suggests, these devices occlude (block) the punctum, or tear duct, which is the drainage duct that carries tears away from the surface of the eye. There are upper and lower punctum ducts in the inner corner of each eye. Blocking these drainage ducts prevents tears from draining away too quickly. Punctal occlusion can be compared to putting a stopper in a sink drain, keeping the tears on the eye's surface for longer periods. This widely performed procedure is safe, quick, painless, and totally reversible.

Punctal occluders are made of a very soft flexible silicone, similar to that used in contact lenses. Though they are barely visible to the naked eye, they are carefully manufactured into an extremely smooth and precise design.

The Parasol® Punctal Occluder

The parasol punctal occluder is one of the most advanced occluders available. Its unique, patented shape is easy to insert because it automatically adjusts to the patient's tear duct opening.

In addition, the parasol's advanced design provides a truly custom fit which, in turn, means greater patient comfort. The parasol punctal occluder can also reduce or eliminate the major cause of discomfort for many contact lens wearers, or those who are unable to tolerate contact lenses.



What Causes Dry Eye?

Dry eye has many causes, which explains why millions are affected. The most common causes include:

- **The Aging Process:** Tear flow normally decreases with age. In fact, the majority of people over age 65 experience some symptoms of dry eyes.[2]
- **Contact Lens Wear:** Contact lens wear can dramatically increase tear evaporation, causing discomfort, infection, and/or increased protein deposits. Research shows that dry eye is the leading cause of contact lens intolerance.
- **Hormonal Changes In Women:** Various hormonal changes associated with pregnancy, oral contraceptives and menopause can contribute to dry eye.
- **Environmental Factors:** People who are exposed to smoke, air pollution, high altitude, sunny, windy, cold or dry air conditions are at risk for dry eye.
- **Side Effects Of Disease/Medications:** There are several diseases and medications which can lower your ability to produce tears. Be sure to give your doctor a complete medical history.
- **Sjögren's Syndrome:** An immune system disorder characterized by inflammation and dryness of the mouth, eyes and other mucous membranes. This disorder damages the lacrimal glands and affects tear production.
- **Laser Vision Corrective Surgeries:** Following various ophthalmic surgical procedures, patients may develop dry eye. Many patients have benefited from temporary punctal occlusion following such procedures.

What Treatments Are Available?

Depending on the intensity of the condition, treatment may be as simple as using artificial tears a few times a day. In more persistent cases, however, a simple non-surgical procedure is available that provides long-term relief of dry eye through the use of tiny plugs called "punctal occluders."

Dry Eye Checklist

If you experience three or more of the symptoms below, you may be suffering from dry eye. Left untreated, your symptoms will most likely intensify, making your daily life unpleasant, or worse, deteriorate your visual acuity. If in doubt, ask your eye care specialist if the parasol® punctal occluder can help you.

- ○ Red Eyes
- ○ Burning
- ○ Itching
- ○ Foreign Body Sensation
- ○ Sandy or Gritty Feeling
- ○ Light Sensitivity
- ○ Watery Eyes
- ○ Occasional Tearing
- ○ Constant Tearing
- ○ Pain or Soreness in or Around Eyes
- ○ Tired Eyes
- ○ Contact Lens Discomfort
- ○ Decreased Contact Lens Tolerance
- ○ Seasonal Allergies
- ○ Dry Throat or Mouth
- ○ Arthritis/Joint Pain

References:

1. "The Epidemiology of Dry Eye Disease: Report of the Epidemiology Subcommittee of the International Dry Eye WorkShop (2007)." The Ocular Surface 5: 93-107. Print.
2. "Dry Eye — What Causes Dry Eyes?" American Optometric Association, n.d. Web: www.aoa.org.

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Do You Suffer From Dry Eyes?

Get The Facts

