

# Information for patients and carers

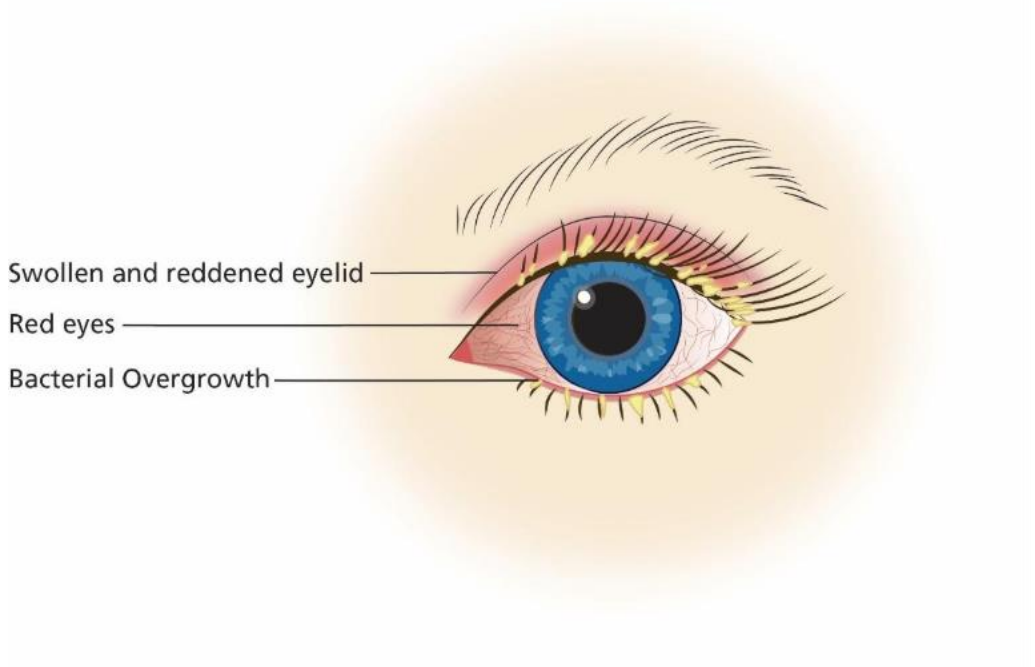
## Blepharitis and Eyelid Hygiene



## What is Blepharitis?

Blepharitis is a very common inflammatory condition of the eyelids. It can make eyelids red and crusty and make your eyes feel irritated or itchy.

It can also lead to burning, soreness or stinging in your eyes.



Blepharitis is a chronic, long-term condition, which means that once you have had it, it can keep recurring.

There are two types of blepharitis:

**Anterior blepharitis** – this affects the outside front edge of your eyelids (near or among your eyelashes). It may be caused by staphylococcus bacteria.

**Posterior blepharitis** – this is also called meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD). This is caused when the meibomian glands (which produce the oil to form part of the tears) become blocked, these are located just behind the eyelashes.

Sometimes patients will experience both types of blepharitis because the causes are often connected.

## What causes blepharitis?

Some possible causes of blepharitis are:

1. A build-up of oil and debris on the eyelids and eyelashes
2. Bacterial eyelid infections
3. Meibomian Gland dysfunction
4. Complications of skin conditions such as Seborrheic Dermatitis or Rosacea

## What is the treatment for blepharitis?

There are treatments which can help you reduce the effects of blepharitis, however there is no strong evidence that any treatment can completely cure the condition.

Eyelid hygiene is key to the management of blepharitis and other conditions such as meibomian gland dysfunction.

### 1. **Warm compresses**

Applying a heated eye mask or warm cloth to closed eyelids for 10 minutes can help soften the clogged oils in the eyelid gland (if using an eye mask always follow the manufacturer's instructions for heating times and application times).

After using the heat, using your forefinger, massage the lower eyelid in an upward motion and the upper eyelid in a downward motion. This will help to push the blocked oil out from the glands.

## 2. **Cleansing**

Cleansing your eyelids daily will help remove any debris, bacteria and oil that can lead to blepharitis, Meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) or dry eye. There are many commercial products available to buy, however, you can cleanse by using a cotton bud or make up pad soaked in warm water, simply wipe from the corner of the eyelids to the outer side a few times once or twice each day (depending on severity of symptoms).

## 3. **Hydrate**

Tear replacement using eye drops and/or ointments can be used for the treatment of blepharitis, Meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) or dry eye.

## 4. **Supplement**

Increasing your intake of Omega-3 Fatty Acids can improve the oil in your meibomian glands and therefore relieve symptoms associated with blepharitis, MGD and dry eye.

## **Contact details**

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Ophthalmology telephone triage service: **01257 245346**

**Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm**

## **Sources of further information**

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware)

<https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/>

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[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

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[patientexperienceandinvolve@LTHTR.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperienceandinvolve@LTHTR.nhs.uk)

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