

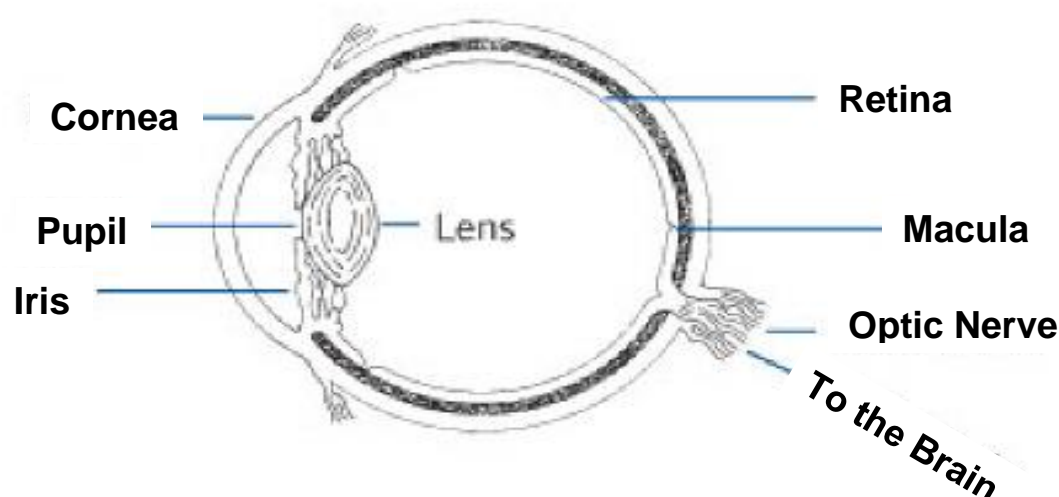
## Patient information

# Dry Eyes

Ophthalmology Department - Aintree Hospital

## What are Dry Eyes?

Dry eyes are either due to a lack of tears being produced to coat the clear front surface of the eye (cornea) (Figure 1) or there is a problem with your tear film (a layer that keeps the eye wet).



**Figure 1**

## What causes it?

- Dry eye is caused when the tear gland is not producing enough tears.
- It can occur as part of the normal ageing process.
- It is more common in women after the menopause.
- Dry dusty working conditions and central heating may worsen the problem.

- Some medical conditions affecting the body as a whole can also cause dry eyes e.g. rheumatoid arthritis.
- Sometimes you may have mucus discharge or the eye may water excessively.
- Dry eyes may also be caused by your eyes not closing fully.

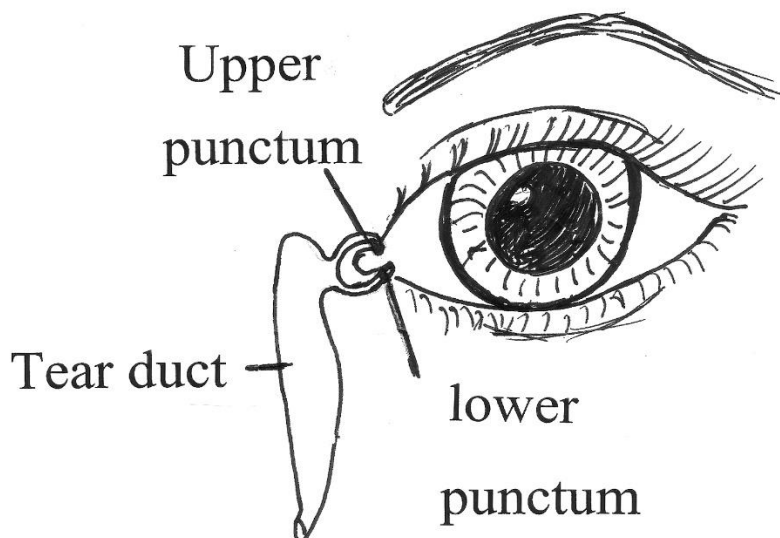
### **What can we do about it?**

We can reduce the discomfort by giving you artificial tears in the form of eye drops.

There are also other eye lubricants in the form of gels or ointments that can be used to coat the front of your eye to make it more comfortable.

The doctor may recommend that small plugs are inserted into the opening of the tear duct (punctum).

This can help by keeping your tears in your eye instead of them draining down your nose. (Figure 1a)



**Figure 1a**

## **How will I feel?**

Your eye may feel uncomfortable with a burning sensation. It may also feel gritty, itchy, or painful.

Occasionally it may cause your vision to be blurred.

The problem may also become worse in warm dry atmospheres or smoky areas.

## **Will it return?**

Dry eyes will **not** go away. The aim of treatment is to reduce the discomfort and prevent damage to the front of your eye.

As the drops are used to reduce the discomfort and are **not** a cure, you will probably always need to use them.

Artificial tear drops and ointment are available over the counter at your Pharmacy.

## **Additional treatments that may be of benefit:**

### **The MGDRx EyeBag®**

The EyeBag® is a silk and cotton eye mask that can be heated in the microwave and applied over the eyes providing a warm compress effect

It is available through the NHS on prescription  
<http://eyebagcompany.com>

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future. Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others.

Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further information**

### **Ophthalmology Clinic**

**Tel: 0151 529 0185**

**Tel: 0151 529 0186**

**Tel: 0151 529 0180**

**You can get further information locally from Customer Services on:**

**Telephone: 0151 529 3287**

**Answer phone: 0151 529 2400**

**Text phone: 0151 529 2523**

**You can also get further support and information from:**

**[www.aboutmyhealth.org](http://www.aboutmyhealth.org)**

**Royal College of Ophthalmologists**

**[www.rcophth.ac.uk](http://www.rcophth.ac.uk)**

**Royal National Institute for the Blind**

**Telephone: 0845 766 99 99**

**[www.rnib.org](http://www.rnib.org)**

**NHS 111**

**Tel: 111**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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