

Patient Information

Dry Eye Syndrome

Eye Unit

What is dry eye syndrome?

Dry eye syndrome is the inability to produce sufficient good quality tears.

The main functions of tears are:

- To keep the eye moist
- To prevent friction between the eyes and the eyelids
- To wash away foreign materials such as dust
- To help prevent infections

If you have been diagnosed as having dry eyes, then those functions listed above will not be working correctly.

Dry dusty working conditions and central heating are two examples which can make this condition worse.

What are the symptoms of dry eye syndrome?

Grittiness and scratching as if there is something in your eye. You may also notice itchiness, burning, discomfort or pain.

The eyes may water because the tear quality is not adequate. Often, the eyes are completely normal to look at.

Treatment

Artificial tear drops are the main treatment. Most artificial tears need to be used as often as necessary to keep the eyes comfortable. The drops can be as frequent as every hour or as little as 6 times a day depending on your needs.

As it is not practical to use drops frequently through the night, a lubricant ointment may be used at night, to keep the eyes comfortable during sleep.

The drops are used to relieve the dry eyes and are not a cure. You will always need to use them.

In rare cases where the drops alone are insufficient, there are other procedures which may be considered.

Some artificial tears can be purchased at the chemist which may be more convenient than obtaining a prescription from your doctor.

Where can I obtain further advice?

If you require further information or advice please contact:-

Eye Outpatient Department on:-

Tel. No:- 01633 – 656268

Between 8.30am – 5.00pm

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**