

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR DRY EYE?

Treatment of dry eye depends on the cause and if there is any associated blepharitis or meibomian gland dysfunction. By performing certain tests your Optometrist can determine the cause and recommend the appropriate treatment.

The following recommendations can help alleviate symptoms and applies to all types of dry eye:

- 1.** A humidifier puts more moisture in the air. With more moisture in the air, your tears evaporate more slowly, keeping your eyes more comfortable. Both furnaces in the winter and air conditioning in the summer decrease the humidity in the air.
- 2.** Excessive air movement dries out your eyes. Avoid having excessive air movement by decreasing the speed of ceiling fans and/or oscillating fans.
- 3.** Large amounts of dust or other particulate matter in the air may worsen the symptoms of dry eye. In those situations, an air filter may be helpful.
- 4.** If you notice your eyes are dry mainly while you are reading or watching TV, taking frequent breaks to allow your eyes to rest and become moist and comfortable again is helpful. Closing your eyes for 10 seconds every five to 10 minutes will increase your comfort, as will blinking more frequently.

Research has also shown that nutrition can be factor in dry eye. Incorporating certain elements in your diet, such as flax seed and fish oil, has been shown to improve dry eye. Omega-3 fatty acids (containing eicosapentaenoic acid [DHA and EPA]) are thought to decrease inflammation, stimulate aqueous tear production, and augment the tear film oil layer by enhancing the flow of oil out of the meibomian glands.

Other types of treatment your optometrist may recommend include:

- Lubricating eye drops
- Warm compresses
- Lid massage/hygiene
- The EyeBag
- Prescription medications
- Food supplements
- Punctal plugs