

**BASIC INFORMATION****DESCRIPTION**

Inflammation of the eyelid edges. It can involve the eyelids; eyelashes; meibomian glands (those which lubricate the lid); conjunctiva (white of the eye).

**FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

- Redness and greasy scales on the eyelid edges.
- Eyelashes that fall out.
- Small ulcers on the eyelid. If the lid edges ulcerate, crusts will form. If crusts are removed, lids will bleed.
- Irritation of the eye if flakes from the lid fall into the eye.
- A feeling that something is in the eye. This includes itching, burning, redness, swelling of the lid, sensitivity to bright light and tearing.
- Discharge from the lids, which glues lashes together during sleep.
- Sensitivity to light.

**CAUSES**

- Bacterial infection, usually staphylococcal, of the eyelash follicles and the meibomian glands.
- Allergic reaction (less serious inflammation only).
- Body lice (rare).

**RISK INCREASES WITH**

- Adults over 60.
- Medical history of seborrheic dermatitis of the scalp and other body parts.
- Exposure to chemical or environmental irritants.
- Crowded or unsanitary living conditions.
- Poor nutrition.
- Immunosuppression due to illness or medication.
- Diabetes mellitus.
- Acne rosacea.

**PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

- Wash hands often, and dry with clean towels.
- Avoid environments that contain dust or other irritating substances.
- Use hypoallergenic eye makeup.
- Control seborrhea of the scalp with medicated shampoos.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Blepharitis can be stubbornly resistant to treatment, but it is sometimes curable in 8 to 12 months. Recurrence is common.

**POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS**

- Loss of eyelashes.
- Ulceration of the cornea (covering of the eye).
- Scarred eyelids.
- Stye.
- Misdirected eyelash growth.

**TREATMENT****GENERAL MEASURES**

- Use warm-water soaks to reduce inflammation and hasten healing. Apply soaks for 20 minutes, then rest at least 1 hour. Repeat as often as needed.
- Remove scales from the lids each day.
- Don't wear eye makeup until inflammation subsides.
- Discontinue soft contact lenses until condition cleared.

**MEDICATIONS**

- Antibiotic ointment or eye drops, which may contain cortisone drugs, may be prescribed.
- Oral medication may be prescribed in severe cases, such as with acne rosacea.

**ACTIVITY**

No restrictions.

**DIET**

No special diet.

**NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF**

- You or a family member has symptoms of blepharitis.
- You have pain in the eye.
- Your vision changes.
- New, unexplained symptoms develop. Drugs used in treatment may produce side effects.