

## Natural Help 4...

# Dry Eye Syndrome



## What is Dry Eye Syndrome?

Tears naturally cleanse the eye, washing out dust and minute debris while at the same time keeping the eye moist. Tears also contain **enzymes that neutralize any harmful microorganisms** that may colonize in the eye causing a variety of eye problems.

Tears are formed in several glands around the eye. The water layer is produced in the lacrimal gland which is located under the upper eyelid, while several smaller glands in the lids produce the oil and mucus layers. Each time you blink, the eyelids spread the tears over the eye.

When the numerous tear glands in the eye produce fewer tears than they should, there is a **chronic lack of lubrication and moisture in the eye**, a condition known as [Dry Eye Syndrome](#).

## The Three Layers of Eye Defense

In healthy eyes, a thin film of liquid usually coats the eyes. This liquid film consists of three layers. The innermost layer is the thinnest and is called mucin (mucus). This thin layer coats the cornea (the eye's clear outer window) and forms a foundation so that the tear film can adhere to the eye. The mucus helps the watery layer to spread evenly over the eye.

The middle, watery or aqueous layer is the largest and thickest. It provides moisture and supplies oxygen as well as other vital nutrients to the cornea. It also helps to flush out dust, dirt or foreign objects that may enter the eye. This layer is a very dilute saltwater solution made up of 98 percent water along with small amounts of salt, proteins and other compounds. Defects of the aqueous layer are the most common cause of [dry eye syndrome](#).

The outer layer is a very thin layer of lipids (fats and oils). These lipids are produced by the meibomian glands and the glands of Zeis (oil glands in the eyelids). The primary function of the outer layer is to help prevent evaporation of the watery layer beneath it.

## Diagnosing Dry Eye Syndrome

The [symptoms of dry eye syndrome](#) include persistent **dryness, redness, scratching, irritation or burning**. Often people with this condition may experience a feeling that something is in the eye.

Ironically, sometimes [symptoms of dry eye syndrome](#) may even cause watery

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eyes as the excessive dryness works to over stimulate production of the watery component of your eye's tears.

## Symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome

- Aging (because fewer tears are produced as we age)
- Menopause (due to hormone fluctuations)
- Side effect to medication (such as antidepressants, antihistamines, birth control pills, or certain blood pressure or Parkinson's medication)
- Thyroid conditions
- Vitamin A deficiency
- Parkinson's Disease
- Sjogren's disease
- Dry, dusty or windy climate
- Insufficient blinking (especially when staring at a computer screen the entire day)
- Thermal or chemical burns
- Smoking
- Long-term wearing of contact lenses

## Tests for Dry Eye Syndrome

If you believe you are experiencing **symptoms of dry eye syndrome** you should visit your physician. The diagnosis of **dry eye syndrome** will be based on an examination of the eye. An ophthalmologist will look at the film of tears on the eye by using a biomicroscope (a slit lamp). A dye called fluorescein may be inserted into the eye to make the tear film more visible. A Schirmer's test (a thin strip of filter paper) may be performed to measure the production rate, evaporation rate and quality of the tear film. Special drops may also be used to diagnose the presence and extent of the dryness.

## What Causes Dry Eye Syndrome?

Dry eyes can also be a symptom of some **systemic diseases such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Rosacea or Sjogren's Syndrome**. In addition, you may experience blurred vision that may improve with blinking or excessive tearing as often occurs after watching television, reading or working in front of a computer.

## Help for Dry Eye Syndrome

**Dry eye treatment** will vary according to the person's needs. Regular use of artificial tears (lubricating eye drops) may alleviate the symptoms of dry eyes, however certain product ranges of artificial tears are watery and may only provide temporary relief, others are thicker and help your eyes to increase tear production.

Be sure to obtain preservative-free artificial tear eye drops as part of your **dry eye treatment**- they are soothing and contain fewer additives that could potentially irritate they eye further.

## Natural Remedies for Dry Eye Syndrome

**Gentle and natural alternatives** to conventional treatment are available to



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### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

**promote eye health and relieve symptoms** in the form of herbal and homeopathic remedies! These **dry eye treatments** are gentle and safe to use and are also an excellent addition to your daily health program. Herbs such as *Vaccinium myrtillus* (bilberry) help to facilitate delivery of essential oxygen and nutrients to the eye. *Aspalathus linearis* (Rooibos) and *Sutherlandia frutescens* can be used to further promote the health and strength of the eye capillaries.

## Tips for Taking Care of Your Eyes

- Always wear sunglasses when outdoors to avoid exposure to the wind, sun and dust.
- Take regular 'eye breaks' when working on the computer.
- Exercise your eyes frequently by shifting your focus from near objects to objects in the far distance and back again.
- When indoors, it's a good idea to use an air cleaner that can filter dust and other particles from the air, but avoid using a humidifier.

## The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called 'alternative' or 'complimentary' medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term 'holistic' medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

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Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are 'unproven' and 'untested', the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market –giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called 'standardized' extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While 'standardized' extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don't make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.



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2) Native Remedies and our suppliers are registered with the FDA as accredited suppliers and manufacturers of health supplements. Our products are sold all over the world and are manufactured to strict international standards in a GMP accredited manufacturing plant.

3) All our remedies are manufactured in an FDA registered pharmaceutical facility under close supervision.

This includes formulation, acquiring and testing of raw ingredients as well as final manufacturing. This gives us the confidence to say that when you are buying a Native Remedies product, you are buying the safest and the best! We know what goes into our remedies - which is why we know what you will get out of them!

4) Manufacturing is done strictly according to the principles of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and all raw ingredients undergo stringent testing before being approved by our registered manufacturing pharmacists.

5) We offer a free email [Ask Our Experts](#) service run by trained consultants ready to advise you on the best choice for your health.

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