



Dry Eye Syndrome

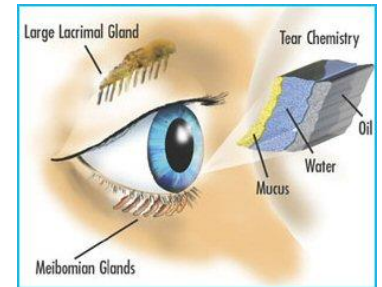
A dry eye is one of decreased or deficient tears. It is usually mild but it can range in severity and symptoms can be very troublesome for patients. The deficiency of the tears causes the eyes to become quite irritated.

Often there is a burning or gritty feeling and discomfort of the eyes. There may be episodes of excessive tearing, mucus discharge or blurred vision.

In severe cases there can be damage to the cornea with scarring.

This condition can arise from decreased formation of tears, poor quality tears or excessive loss of tears. This can be caused by:

- * The natural ageing process and menopause
- * A dry environment: wind, smoke and air conditioning.
- * Certain medications
- * Eye disorders such as eyelid inflammation
- * Primary Sjogren's Syndrome
- * Systemic disorders (e.g. Rheumatoid Arthritis).



Once a general or eye disease is excluded as a cause and treated, the most common form of treatment for dry eyes are artificial tears drops, gels or ointments. Preservative-free and cyclosporine drops are used in more severe cases.