

Can Dry Eye Syndrome Affect My Ability to Wear Contact Lenses?

Yes. Dry Eye Syndrome is the leading cause of contact lens intolerance or discomfort. Contacts can disrupt the evaporation of tears from the eyes causing irritation, protein deposits, infection, and pain.



Can Dry Eye Syndrome Be Cured?

The symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome can be relieved, and you can reduce your chances for complications.

How is Dry Eye Syndrome Diagnosed?

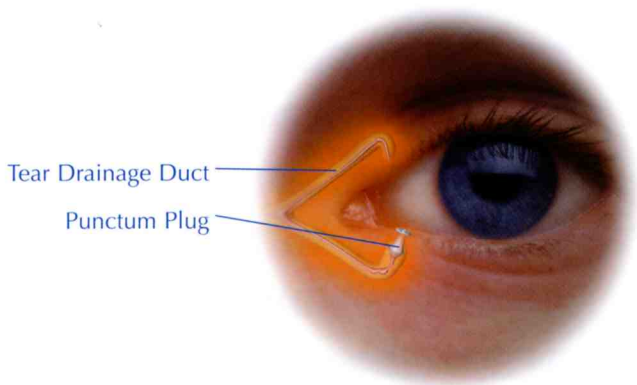
Your eyecare professional can perform a **simple, in-office diagnostic test** to evaluate the quality and quantity of your tears. General health, medications, and environmental factors will be a consideration in diagnosing dry eye.

How is Dry Eye Syndrome Treated?

Depending on the causes, Dry Eye Syndrome can be treated as a temporary problem or a lifelong disease requiring long-term treatment. **Either way, tears must be conserved and/or replaced in order to provide relief.**

Replacing the Tears:

Artificial Tears are probably the most common form of treatment for Dry Eye symptoms. These will provide temporary relief, **but with prolonged use, some preservatives in artificial tears can actually disrupt the eye's natural production of tears.** This can lead to further aggravation of the condition, or even **wash away the natural infection-fighting tear film on the eye.**



Conserving the Tears:

In cases of persistent dry eye symptoms, permanent but reversible closure of the tear duct, sometimes known as punctal occlusion, may be the best solution. Punctal occlusion allows you to retain your own natural tears without the bother or expense of constantly replacing the tear film with artificial tears.

How Can Punctal Occlusion Help Me Keep My Natural Tears?

Punctal Occlusion acts very much like a stopper in a sink: when the punctal opening is closed, tears stay on the eye longer.



There are three basic methods of tear duct closure:

Method	Easily reversible?
Cautery	no
Laser	no
Punctum plugs	yes

What are Punctum Plugs?

Punctum Plugs are the **least invasive of the long term solutions to Dry Eye Syndrome.** A small, soft silicone plug, about the size of a pinhead or sesame seed, is non-surgically inserted into the natural punctal opening. The entire procedure can be performed in your doctor's office within a few minutes. Many patients report immediate relief from Dry Eye symptoms. **Although silicone plugs are considered a permanent treatment for Dry Eye, your doctor can easily monitor and remove them if necessary.**



What Should I Do?

Since extreme dryness can cause serious damage to the eye, an examination and diagnosis by your eyecare professional is recommended.