

ARE YOUR EYES CRYING FOR HELP?



Everyone experiences the symptoms from time to time: Burning, irritable eyes. A feeling that something is actually scratching the eye. But for some 3 million American women (and 1 million men), these symptoms are chronic, because they suffer from Dry Eye Syndrome.

TEARS ARE IMPORTANT Tears are essential to good vision. They lubricate the eye, protect it from infections and wash away allergens. With Dry Eye Syndrome, the eye produces too few tears, or tears of such poor quality that they don't stay on the eye. Ironically, some people with Dry Eye Syndrome may actually experience tears running down their cheeks.

WOMEN ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE While everyone experiences reduced tear production as they age, women are more prone to Dry Eye Syndrome than men by a 3 to 1 margin. Studies have shown that hormone therapy may increase the incidence of Dry Eye Syndrome. It is also a side effect of other drugs such as birth control pills, blood pressure medicines, antihistamines and certain anti-depressants.

OUTSIDE INFLUENCES Environmental factors may magnify the symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome. These include a dusty, dry or windy climate, air conditioning or heating systems (especially if the vent blows on your face), and even staring at a computer screen for extended periods of time.

HELP IS AVAILABLE Your eye doctor can offer several options for managing Dry Eye Syndrome, such as:

- Lubricating drops that can minimize the dry, scratchy sensation.
- Prescription eye drops that can actually improve tear production.
- Temporary or permanent closure of the lacrimal (tear) ducts to keep your tears from draining away so quickly.

Strange but True: Watery eyes may indicate Dry Eye Syndrome

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome, please let us know.

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