

## **Do You Have Dry Eyes?**

### **What is it?**

Dry eye syndrome is a condition where the body is not able to protect the front surface of the eye and provide good quality vision. Our tear film is crucial to good vision as well as a healthy and comfortable front surface of the eye. The tear film has 3 layers that work together in a complex manner to supply all the nutrients to the front surface of the eye as well as protect the eye from infection.

### **Who gets it?**

A lot more people than you think. Dry eye syndrome is the most common disease seen in our office. People living in arid environments, contact lens wearers, post-operative surgical patients and people over the age of 55 are most commonly affected by dry eye syndrome.

### **What are the symptoms?**

Common symptoms of dry eye included blurred or fluctuating vision, itchy, gritty or burning eyes. Other common symptoms include uncomfortable contact lenses wear, foreign body sensation and sore or tired eyes when reading or using the

computer. On the back is a questionnaire. If you circle “yes” on more than 2 or more of these questions you may have some degree of dry eye syndrome.

### **What causes it?**

When the body is not able to make enough tears to protect the surface of the eye, cells on the front part of the cornea become sick or even die leading to a variety of symptoms that affect both comfort and vision. An arid environment as well as prolonged reading or computer work can often cause evaporation of the tear film. Dry eyes can also be caused by hormone changes, allergies, auto-immune diseases, eye surgery, contact lens wear, eye infections and drugs such as oral antihistamines, antidepressants or hormone replacement therapy. Environmental factors such as exposure to cigarette smoke or other chemicals can also lead to problems.

### **How do we treat it?**

The first step is finding a doctor who will take time to accurately determine the cause of the dry eye and

discuss your treatment options with you. There are many therapies available to treat dry eyes and either increase or retain your own natural tears. The therapy that is right for you is dependent on the cause of the dry eye condition. Common therapies include artificial tear preparations, lubricant ointments and mechanisms for partial or total blockage of the drainage of the tear film called punctal occlusion. Other more advanced therapies include nutritional supplements as well as both oral and topical medications. Many conditions do not have treatments that provide immediate results. It is normal to take a few months to significantly improve many of the conditions. Dry eyes may need to be treated on a daily basis. Therapeutic goals are to control or eliminate the symptoms, maintain and preserve visual acuity and prevent complications secondary to inflammation and drying out of the ocular surface. If you suffer from dry eyes ask the front desk or Dr. Paul for a consultation to make your vision more clear and your eyes more comfortable.

# DRY EYE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions	Yes	No
1. Do you feel like you have something in your eye, a sandy or gritty sensation?	___	___
2. Does it feel better when you rub your eyes?	___	___
3. Does your vision seem to fluctuate when you read?	___	___
4. Does your blurred vision clear immediately after the blink and then blur again?	___	___
5. Do your eyes feel stuck shut in the morning?	___	___
6. Does washing or rubbing your eyes seem to help?	___	___
7. Do you suffer from frequent styes?	___	___
8. Do your eyes tear or water?	___	___
___ outside or inside?      ___ in air conditioning	___	___
___ using the computer      ___ in a smoke filled area	___	___
9. Do you currently use artificial tears?	___	___
10. Do your eyes burn?	___	___
When does it start? _____		
How long does it last? _____		
11. Do your eyes get tired?	___	___
12. Do your eyes feel sore when blinking or moving your eyes?	___	___
13. Do you have sensitivity to bright lights or sunshine?	___	___
14. Do your eyes itch?	___	___
15. Are your lids usually red or puffy?	___	___
16. Do you have frequent eye infections?	___	___
17. Do you have discharge from your eyes?	___	___
18. Have you ever had eyelid surgery?	___	___
19. Have you ever had an injury to your eyelids?	___	___
20. Do you wear contact lenses?	___	___
How long do you wear them on a daily basis? ___ hrs/day		
21. Are your lenses comfortable?	___	___
22. Are you sensitive to the contact lens solution?	___	___
23. Have you worn lenses before but quit wearing them due to discomfort?	___	___

Do you have any of the following?

\_\_\_ Allergies      \_\_\_ Asthma      \_\_\_ Thyroid Disorder      \_\_\_ Arthritis  
 \_\_\_ Chronic Cough      \_\_\_ Sinus Issues      \_\_\_ Dry Mouth      \_\_\_ Headaches

Do you take any of the following medications?

\_\_\_ Anti anxiety      \_\_\_ Anti depressants      \_\_\_ Sedatives/sleeping medications  
 \_\_\_ Hormones      \_\_\_ Birth Control      \_\_\_ Hypertension Drugs  
 \_\_\_ Diuretics      \_\_\_ Oral anti-histamines      \_\_\_ Inhalers/Ventolator/Steroids