

### **Red, bloodshot eyes**

Lack of sleep, swimming in heavily chlorinated pools and smoky or polluted atmospheres can all bring about bloodshot eyes.

Always be sure your symptoms haven't been triggered as a result of contamination from a foreign body. If in doubt, visit your local optician.

Don't be tempted to use brightening drops. These can cause problems for your eye health because they use vasoconstrictors to narrow the blood vessels in your eye, making them look whiter. Using these drops will not deal with the underlying cause of any irritation or relieve symptoms.

Artificial tears, eye ointments or refreshing eye drops can help to soothe and lubricate the eye.

### **Sore, dry, irritated eyes**

This could be a symptom of screen-dry eye. If you use a screen for prolonged periods minimise the symptoms of screen-dry eye by practicing the 20-20-20 rule – every 20 minutes, look 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds to give your eyes a break.

Also remember to blink.

A warm compress applied to the eyes may also provide relief. Your optician or pharmacy can also recommend a spray or drop to help manage the symptoms.

\* Eye Health UK

Published by **Eye Health UK** (registered charity no 1086146)  
Office 216, 3 Edgar Buildings, George Street, Bath, BA1 2FJ

# ARE YOUR EYES, HAPPY EYES?

A guide to some common  
minor eye conditions and  
how to treat them

[www.visionmatters.org.uk](http://www.visionmatters.org.uk)  
@myvisionmatters #EyeWeek



**NATIONAL EYE  
HEALTH WEEK**  
MONDAY 24 - SUNDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2018  
**YOUR VISION MATTERS**

Three quarters of us say we've experienced poor eye health in the past year.\*

Here's our guide to some common eye conditions...

**Gritty, sticky or red eyes** can signal conjunctivitis – an inflammation of the conjunctiva (the thin, transparent layer that lines the inner eyelid and covers the white part of the eye).

Your body's own immune system can usually fight off the infection, however, over-the-counter remedies available from your pharmacy can help minimise any discomfort and speed up recovery times.

**Watery eyes** could be a sign of dry eye. Other symptoms of dry eye can include a sandy-gritty irritation that gets worse as the day goes on, dryness, a burning sensation, itchy, red or tired eyes, or a feeling that you have some dust in your eye.

If you suffer one or more of these symptoms, see your optician or local pharmacy for advice.

Treatment for dry eye is usually relatively straightforward. Your optician can advise on and supply a range of artificial tears and eye ointments to soothe and lubricate the eye.

### **Irritated eyelids**

Red, irritated eyelids may be a sign of blepharitis.

Other symptoms can

include scales that cling to the base of the eyelashes, itchiness or a burning sensation, sticky eyelids, sensitivity to light or a decrease in the production of tears.

The elderly and people who suffer from dry skin conditions seem to be particularly prone to the condition.

Good eye care is essential at all times to prevent the condition recurring. To ease symptoms, gently cleanse the eye.

In severe cases, an antibiotic ointment or eye drops may be used to help minimise symptoms and relieve discomfort.

### **Itchy, swollen or watery eyes**

This could be a sign of allergy or hay fever.

To minimise symptoms, try to reduce exposure to the irritant. For example, if you have a pollen allergy keep house and car windows closed, wear wrap-a-round sunglasses and avoid cutting grass.

Used tea bags that have been kept in the fridge overnight can be used as a cold compress to help relieve discomfort and reduce any swelling around the eye.

Help reduce hay fever symptoms by having a shower and washing your hair when you get home / before bed to remove any pollen clinging to you.

Antihistamines are often very effective at treating symptoms of allergies, particularly if they are taken prior to the onset of any symptoms.