

triggered as a result of contamination from a foreign body. If in doubt, seek medical advice and avoid rubbing your eye.

Don't be tempted to use drops that make your eyes look whiter. These simply mask problems and do not treat them.

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

Sore, dry, irritated eyes

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

Flashes and floaters

Small dark dots, squiggly

lines, rings or cobwebs and flashes of light are usually harmless. However if they suddenly get worse, are accompanied by pain; or start after an eye trauma, seek immediate advice. Call your optician or NHS 111.

Many local opticians now offer NHS appointments for minor or urgent eye complaints. Find out more about services where you live:

England primaryeyecare.co.uk/find-a-practice/

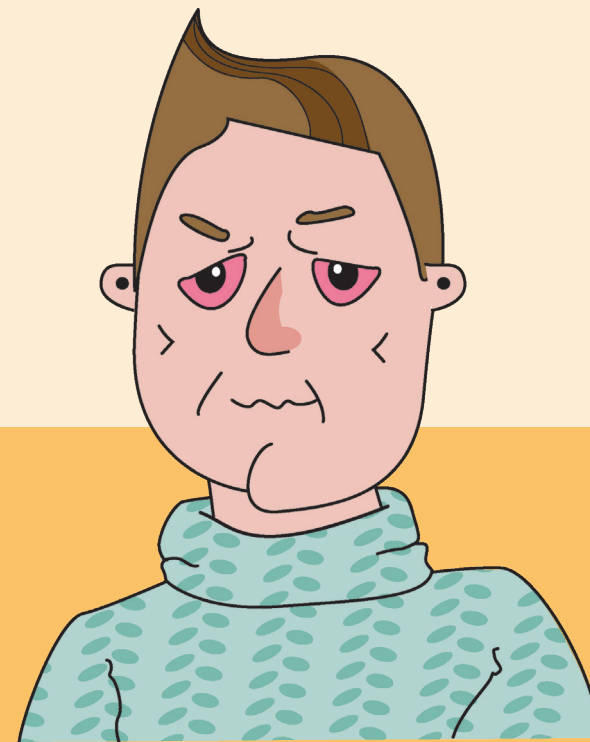
Wales nhs.wales/sa/eye-care-wales/

Scotland gov.scot/policies/primary-care-services/eyecare/

Northern Ireland hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/nipears.htm

This information is a guide only and should not replace advice given by your healthcare professional. (Published 08.23)

MINOR EYE CONDITIONS



Common symptoms of poor eye health explained

For more information visit visionmatters.org.uk

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**NATIONAL EYE
HEALTH WEEK**
MONDAY 18 – SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2023
YOUR VISION MATTERS

Millions of us suffer poor eye health every year. This is usually mild and can be treated at home.

Here's a guide to some common symptoms and possible treatments...

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.

Watery eyes could be a sign of dry eye. Other symptoms of dry eye may 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 optometrist or pharmacy for advice.

Treatment for dry eye is usually relatively straightforward. Your optometrist 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 signal 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 tear production.

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

Good eye care is essential to prevent the condition recurring. Ease symptoms by gently cleansing the eye with sterile lid wipes.

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

Itchy, swollen or watery eyes 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, check the pollen count before leaving home, 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 hay fever by having a shower and washing your hair when you get home / before bed to get rid of 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.

Ask your optometrist or pharmacist for advice.

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 that your symptoms haven't been