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## BLEPHARITIS

Blepharitis is a very common condition that causes small crusts to form between the eyelashes. Under the crusts bacteria proliferate and cause itching, burning and general discomfort around the eyes. Blepharitis is more of a nuisance than a disease but it may cause secondary problems if untreated. These include permanent distortion of the eyelashes and occasionally ulcers on the eye.

Blepharitis can be treated quite simply but it tends to recur after weeks or months. If symptoms return the course of treatment can be repeated.

**A course of treatment for blepharitis** lasts two weeks.

The treatment is applied twice daily.

- a) First wash your hands.
- b) **Hot bathing:** wet a face flannel with hot water from the tap. Place it on the closed eyelids being careful not to burn yourself. Allow it to cool.
- c) **Lid cleansing:** dip a cotton bud in warm tap water - mixing baby shampoo into the water will help. Now, with the eyes gently closed, rub the eyelashes fairly firmly for about 15 seconds to loosen the crusts. Repeat on the other eye.
- d) Dry the eyelids with a tissue or towel.
- e) **Antibiotic ointment:** put a little eye ointment onto a finger and apply it sparingly to the lashes; rub gently to ensure it reaches the skin between the lashes.
- e) Repeat this treatment morning and evening for two weeks.

The risk of recurrence of the condition can be reduced by regular cleansing of the eyelashes as in c) above.

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