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THE 'ONE SNIP' PROCEDURE

Q *What is the 'one snip' procedure?*

A There are many reasons why an eye may water. Tears drain away from the eye through small tubular channels at the inner ends of the upper and lower eyelids. They eventually reach the back of the nose. A block may occur in several possible places in this system of tubes and cause watering. The 'one snip' procedure is used if the block occurs at the *entry* to the tubes at the inner ends of the eyelids.

Q *How is the operation done?*

A Under local anaesthetic, as an outpatient, the entry ports to the tear drainage system of tubes are enlarged by making very small cuts to overcome the narrowing. The cuts are made at the back of the lids and they are invisible on the surface. It is a painless procedure.

Q *Are there any complications of the procedure?*

A No. The eye is not at any risk and the small cuts do not reduce the normal function of the lids in any way.

Q *How successful is the 'one snip' procedure.*

A If the only block to drainage of the tears is at the entry to the channels in the lids the procedure is very successful. However, there may be other blocks further down in the tear drainage system which may be contributing to the watering. Because of this the system will normally be 'syringed' with salty water at the same time as the 'one snip' to identify any other cause of the watering. Syringing does not clear any other blocks, it only identifies them. Other treatment may be needed if another block is found.

Q *Is it ever necessary to repeat the 'one snip' procedure?*

A Occasionally the enlarged entry created by the 'one snip' can become narrowed again. The procedure can then be repeated.

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