

A NEWSLETTER FROM



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'Dry Eye' in Summer

See your eye doctor and consult your pharmacist

For some of us over 50, a first experience with **dry eye syndrome** often hits during cold winter months when we spend more time indoors, often in front of our computer screens or watching TV. But summer has features that can bring on a first bout too; the feelings of eye fatigue, or red, sore, burning, scratchy, dry, light-sensitive eyes.

In summer, symptoms can be caused by exposure to:

- Sun, glare and dust,
- Gusty breezes off the St. Lawrence,
- Exposure to chemicals used in swimming pools (if we don't wear goggles), or
- The antihistamines we use to manage – Achoo! – our summer allergies.

But beyond the seasonal causes of dry eye, some of us are at higher risk because we:

- Eat insufficient quantities of omega-3 fatty acids (found in salmon or tuna),
- Have an autoimmune disorder such as lupus,
- Might Be taking certain types of medication,
- Have Type 2 diabetes, or
- Are postmenopausal.



No matter what symptoms you might experience, they're all 'good' reasons to see your optometrist or ophthalmologist. And before you see the eye doctor, your pharmacist can help determine whether any medication might be contributing to dry eye. So be sure to tell your pharmacist if you use any non-prescription meds like antihistamines, decongestants or pain relievers such as ibuprofen. The pharmacist might recommend some over-the-counter moisturizing eye drops while you wait to see your eye care professional.



Is dry eye syndrome serious?

Bottom line, healthy eyes require lubricating tears, called basal tears, that moisturize, clean, comfort and protect the eye every time we blink. This means, the eye care specialist needs to examine your eyes, in the context of your overall health, to determine the best treatment strategy for maintaining optimum eye health.



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