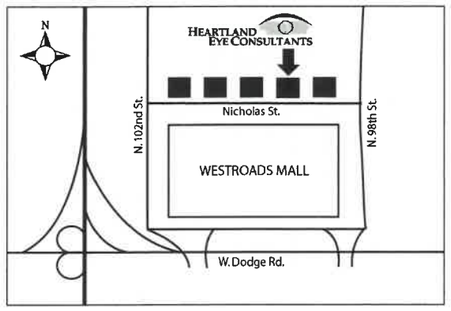
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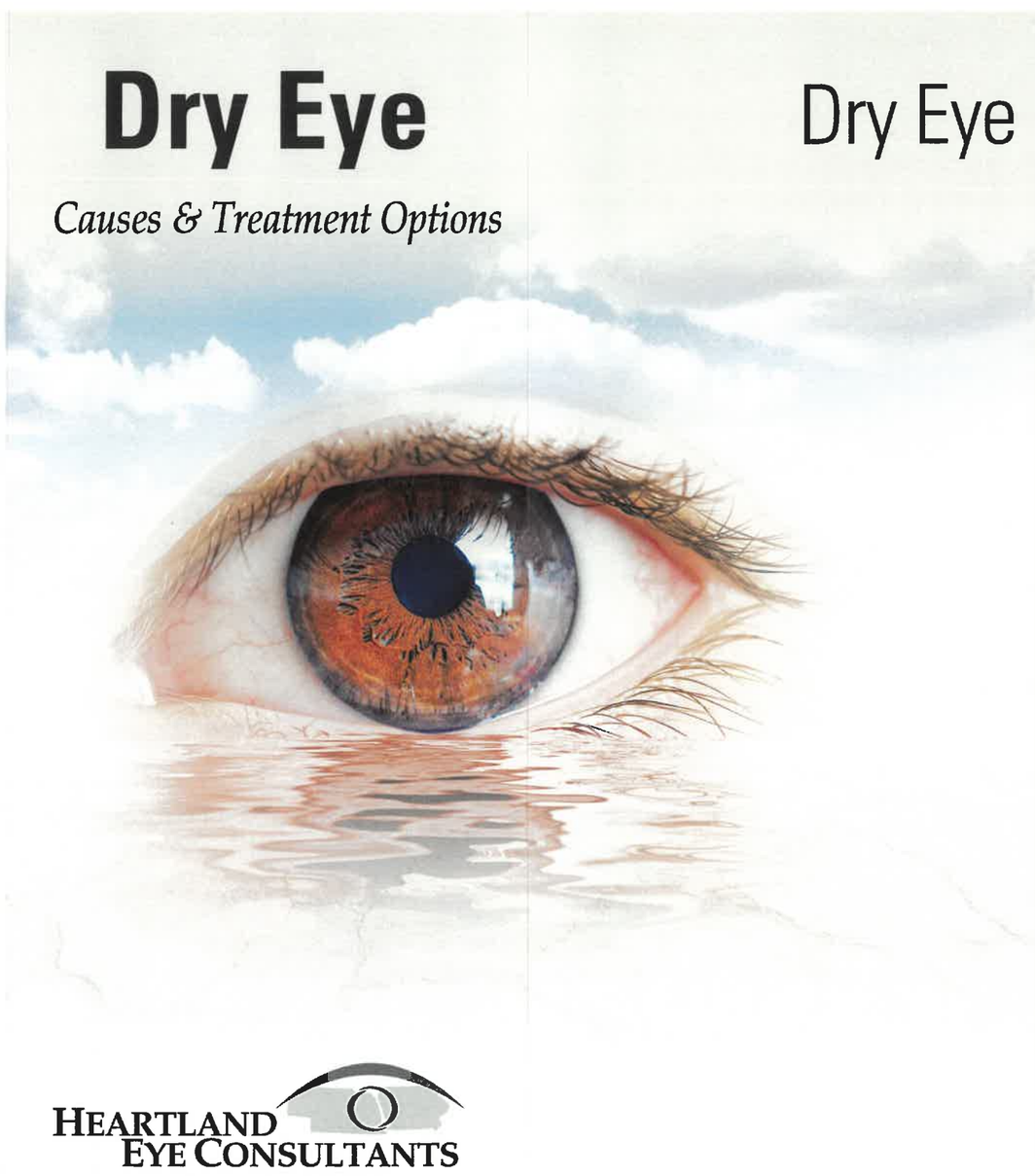


We are located North of Westroads Mall near I-680 and West Dodge Road. Take the loop around the mall to Nicholas Street. We are across the street from Dick's Sporting Goods. It is the only building in the area with an American flag.

9900 Nicholas St., Suite 250
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Dry Eye

Causes & Treatment Options



HEARTLAND EYE CONSULTANTS

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Dry Eye Disease

It is estimated that more than 20 million US adults have been diagnosed with Dry Eye Disease (DED). It is more prevalent among women than men and its diagnosis increases with age. DED is a chronic and progressive disease that will require constant management to minimize its progression.

The surface of the eye is nourished and protected by lubricating tears that contain a balance of mucous, water, oil, nutrient proteins, and antibodies. When this tear chemistry is out of equilibrium, or balance, you may experience the symptoms of dry eye disease including red, irritated, painful, itching eyes along with excessive tearing.

Dry Eye Disease has been typically diagnosed as being either "evaporative DED" or "aqueous tear deficient DED." However, the Film and Ocular Surface Society's DEWS II report has concluded that these two diagnoses do not take into account the many different factors that can cause dry eye. Instead, there are many patients that are now being diagnosed as "mixed DED," either "predominantly evaporative DED" or "predominantly aqueous deficient DED."

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Diagnosing Dry Eye Disease

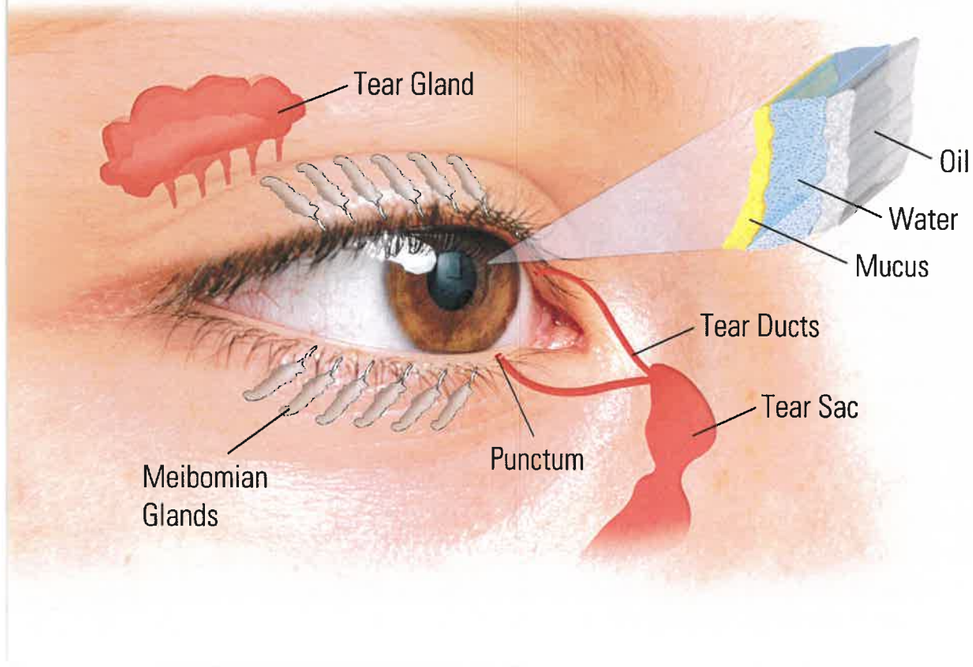
To determine the best treatment for your dry eyes, your eye doctor will want a comprehensive patient history to determine the cause of your DED. You will be asked about your symptoms, the medications you are taking, contact lens wear, tobacco use, your environmental conditions, time spent on the computer and surgical history.

There are also a number of other eye conditions and diseases that can mimic the signs and symptoms of dry eye. Therefore, it is important to determine if diseases such as diabetes or conditions such as menopause in women, allergies, conjunctivitis, any number of infectious diseases, or eyelid and corneal abnormalities could be contributing factors.

There are a variety of screening tests and methods that may be used to diagnose the specific cause of your dry eye. Certain tests can measure the speed in which your tears evaporate.

Other tests can determine the actual mix and deficiencies of mucus, water, oil, nutrient proteins and antibodies of your tears.

More advanced diagnostic tests can be used to visualize your oil producing Meibomian glands to check for blockages and determine their overall health. Once the predominate type of your DED is determined, your eye doctor will develop a customized and targeted treatment plan.



Treatment Strategy

A guiding principle for DED treatment is to return patients to "homeostasis," a state of equilibrium where all the factors that contribute to normal tear chemistry return to a more regulated process.

The specific treatment strategy will depend on the cause and severity of your condition and usually requires a staged approach with frequent follow-up visits in an attempt to minimize your dry eye symptoms.

Tear Supplements

The most conservative treatment is the use of tear supplements. This approach involves trying to find the appropriate balance of various nutritional supplements, artificial tears, gels, and ointments for your level of tear deficiency. Vitamin supplements and nutrient fatty acids like Omega-3 have also proven effective at promoting healthy tear chemistry.

Tear Retention

Another strategy is to enable your eyes to make better and longer use of the small amount of lubricating tears it does produce. This can be accomplished by closing the small drain holes found in the inner corner of the eyelids called the "punctum." Temporary and dissolvable "punctum plugs" may be inserted to determine if punctal occlusion would be beneficial. If they do relieve your symptoms, more permanent plugs made of silicone would be used.

Tear Stimulation

Your doctor may also prescribe Xidra® or Restasis®. These are prescription eye drop medications that have proven to increase tear production when dry eye is caused by inflammation of the conjunctiva, tear gland or eye's surface.



Platelet Rich Eye Drops

Platelet rich plasma personalized eye drops, made from each patient's own blood, can act as a natural replacement for tears. In severe dry eye cases, the epithelial cells on the surface of the cornea can become sick and fall off. These eye drops include growth factors that can promote the growth of new epithelium cells and repair the damage done to the ocular surface.

Lid Hygiene & Therapy

Eye lid scrubs are important to remove debris and promote good lid hygiene. Commercially available heat masks may also be recommended for daily use and are more effective at maintaining the proper temperature needed to keep the oil in the Meibomian glands liquefied than warm wet washcloths. However, a supplemental in-office heat/gland expression treatment may also be necessary to increase the outflow of oil into the tear film.