

Dry eye syndrome, also known as ocular surface disease affects millions of people yearly.

Symptoms include burning, stinging, watering, blurred vision; red eyes; gritty feeling; increased sensitivity to environmental pollutants such as smoke; and discomfort in windy environments.

There are many underlying etiologies which can contribute to dry eye discomfort.

Systemic conditions which can be associated with dry eyes include but are not limited to



Rosacea, Lupus, Thyroid disease, Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, and Gastric Ulcer.

[Certain classes of medications](#) have also been implicated with regard to dry eyes. They include but are not limited to hormone replacement, including birth control pills; chemo therapeutic agents; antidepressants; certain blood pressure medications; anti-allergy medications such as antihistamines and beta blockers, both oral and topical.

There are many treatment options available for the treatment of dry eye syndrome. Artificial tear replacement is by far the easiest and most common. Omega three supplements such as flax

seed oil have also been found to be helpful. Mechanical devices such as punctual plugs (which reduces outflow of tears) in many cases is a simple reversible procedure which can decrease an individual's dependency on artificial tear supplements. Medications either oral or topical (i.e. Restasis) can be effective for some individuals with regard to the treatment of dry eyes.

In all cases however, your eye care physician will need to work closely with you to determine which regimen will be the most effective at treating your ocular condition. Remember there is no "magic drop or pill" to treat dry eyes and you may need to be seen on multiple occasions to determine the effectiveness of a previously prescribed regimen. Work with your eye care physician, follow the prescribed regimen and you can move away from the red watery burning symptoms associated with dry eyes.