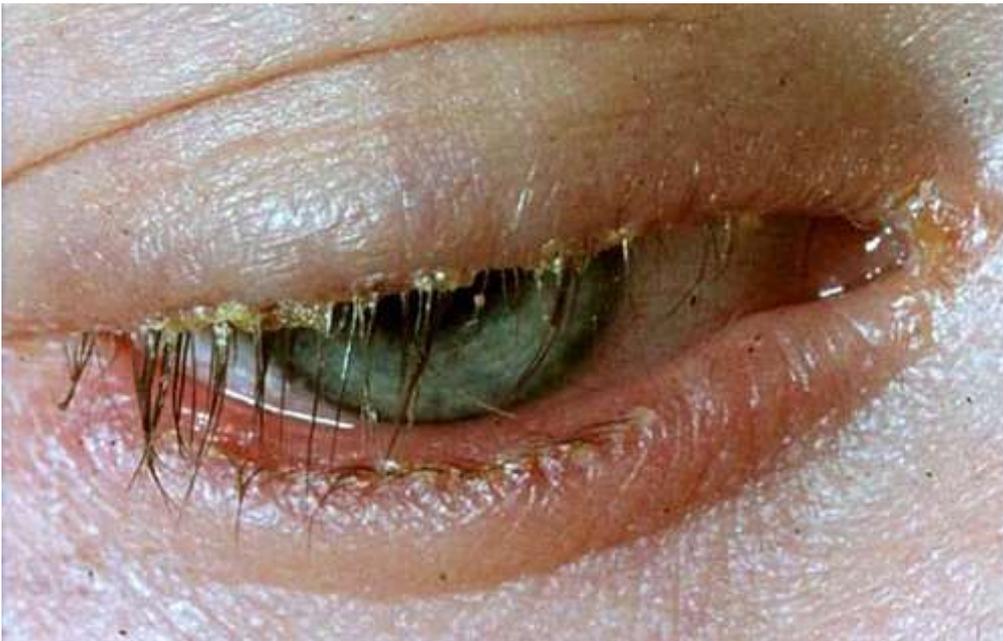


Inflammatory Lid Problems in Children

Advice for Parents

Blepharitis & Staphylococcal hypersensitivity disease



The skin at the base of the eyelashes can become inflamed and lead to a lot of problems on the surface of the eye. You may notice scaly deposits and debris that look like dandruff along the lid margins. These allow normal friendly skin bacteria to overgrow and produce a toxin in the tears. This causes the eyes to become very irritated. You may notice your child rubbing the eyes and blinking a lot. If untreated, this can progress to an allergic reaction with redness and inflammation of the surface of the eyes. It can progress to constant blinking and intolerance of bright lights, interfering with daily activities.

Your GP will prescribe antibiotic eye ointment. This should be used 4 times a day for 5-7 days. If the lids are very inflamed, it may need to be continued at night only for another 3 weeks.

The lid inflammation is a skin problem. It will flare up and down as your child grows. It is important to carry out simple measures to control this condition, as part of your child's routine.

Daily hot bathing and lid cleaning will help. This is done with a clean facecloth and wash hand basin full of hand hot water (temperature suitable for skin contact). Wring out face cloth and fold to make hot towel. Show your child how to close eyes and apply hot cloth to closed eye lids. The aim is to heat the oil glands in the eyelids and allow them to open. The cloth can be reheated again as soon as it begins to cool. Ideally this should be done every day for up to 2 minutes at a time. Finally, wipe the cloth gently along the base of the lashes to help dislodge any debris.

Lid cleaning can be incorporated as a game into bath time routine in very small children.

A daily omega 3 oil supplement can be useful. It is now available to buy as chewable fruit flavoured capsules for smaller children. Milled linseeds can also be added to breakfast cereals as an omega 3 source.