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Lid Margin Disease

Lid margin disease is a common and frequently chronic inflammation of the eyelids. Symptoms include irritation, itching, and, occasionally, a red eye. This condition frequently occurs in people who tend to have oily skin, dandruff, or dry eyes.

Bacteria normally reside on the skin, but in some people, they thrive in the skin at the base of the eyelashes. Nearby oil glands may be overactive, causing dandruff-like scales and particles to form along the lashes and eyelid margins, which can cause redness, stinging, or burning.

Lid margin disease cannot be cured, but it can be controlled with a few simple, daily hygienic measures, such as the following:

- At least twice a day, place a warm, wet washcloth over your closed eyelids for a minute. Rewet it as it cools, two or three times. This will soften and loosen scales and debris. More important, it helps liquefy the oily secretions from the eyelids' oil glands, which helps prevent the development of a **chalazion**, an inflamed lump in an eyelid oil gland.
- Do eyelid hygienic scrubs as described below daily.

When medications are necessary, they may include:

- artificial tears (over-the-counter eyedrops) to relieve symptoms of dry eye;
- antibiotics (oral or topical) to decrease bacteria on the eyelids; and
- steroids (short-term), to decrease inflammation.
- Fish oil and flaxseed oil preparations are very helpful. We recommend Theratears Nutrition available at the drugstore without a prescription. Take 3 gel caps with breakfasts every day.

Medications alone are not sufficient to control lid margin disease; the application of warmth and detailed cleansing of the lashes daily is the key.

Hints about treatment:

Use Ocusoft plus moistened towelettes (purchase at the drugstore without a prescription). Scrub the eyelids and lashes for at least 30 seconds for each eye every morning.

Lid margin disease is often a chronic condition which gets better with treatment but can return if treatment is discontinued. I will attempt to keep you symptom free with the minimal treatment possible.