

Patient information: Accident and Emergency

Marginal Keratitis

What is marginal keratitis?

Marginal Keratitis is an inflammation of the cornea – the clear window on the front of your eye – and is usually due to a condition called blepharitis (please see our separate information leaflet on blepharitis). Less commonly, it is caused by wearing contact lenses.

Your eyelids contain tiny glands that make oil which keeps your eyes moist. In blepharitis, these glands become blocked, which causes your eyelids to become irritated and your eyes sore. In some cases, dandruff-like flakes build up at the base of the eyelashes. It is thought that, in some people, blepharitis is partly caused by sensitivity to the bacteria (staphylococcus) which normally live on the skin. The surface of the eye can become inflamed. The eye becomes red and sore and may develop small white ulcers around the edge of the cornea. This is called marginal keratitis.

What are my treatment options?

- **Lid hygiene** – this treats the blepharitis which causes marginal keratitis. You should carry out good 'lid hygiene' once or twice a day (even when you do not have any

symptoms), to prevent marginal keratitis from recurring.

For a video demonstration of these techniques please search 'lid hygiene' on Moorfields Eye Hospital YouTube channel or visit: <https://tinyurl.com/lid-hygiene>



Alternatively you can scan the QR code above.

- **Warm compresses** – Use water that is hot, but not hot enough to burn. Soak cotton wool or a clean flannel in the water, wring out and gently press onto your closed eyelids for two to three minutes at a time. This melts the oily secretion blocking the openings of the glands and softens any lash flakes.
- **Lid massage** – Massage your eyelids by gently rolling your index finger over them in a circular motion or running the length of your finger up and down your eyelids towards your

eyelashes. This helps to push out the oil from the tiny eyelid glands.

- **Lid scrubs** – Use a moistened cotton bud to gently clean the inside edge of your eyelids and more firmly scrub off any flakes on the lashes. This is best done in front of a mirror.
- **Antibiotics and steroid drops or ointments**-Antibiotic drops or ointment along with steroid drops can be useful in calming down any eye inflammation. Your eye doctor will discuss with you whether this treatment is suitable.

When to seek advice

If your eye becomes increasingly red or painful, your sight becomes more blurred or you see white patches getting bigger on the cornea, you should call Moorfields Direct for advice (details opposite) or go to your local A&E department. You can also go to Moorfields A&E department at City Road (open 24/7 for emergency eye problems only) for a further examination, or log on to our emergency online video consultation service at <https://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/emergency-care>

Useful contacts

Moorfields A&E at City Road, 162 City Road, London EC1V 2PD

**Telephone switchboard:
020 7253 3411**

This is a 24 hour service for eye emergencies only. Following triage, you

may be seen on the day or informed that no treatment is needed at the service and advised to see your GP or optician. Alternatively, you may be booked into an urgent care clinic at City Road for a different day.

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Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
City Road, London EC1V 2PD
Phone: 020 7253 3411
www.moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields Direct telephone helpline

Phone: 020 7566 2345

Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm

Saturday, 9am-5pm

Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325

Email: moorfields.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, except bank holidays

Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.





Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right. For more information about your rights and responsibilities, please visit the Moorfields website and search 'Referrals to treatment (RTT)'. To learn more about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs