

## Dry Eyes

### **What Causes Dry Eyes?**

Dry eye occurs when our eyes do not make enough tears or produce tears without the right balance. Dry air, problems blinking, aging, some medicines, damage to the eye and some health problems may cause dry eyes.

### **How Do I know this is Dry Eyes?**

People with dry eyes are often sensitive to sunlight and wind. Eyes may water all the time. Vision may be blurry. Some eyes itch, burn or feel as if sand were in the eye. People with dry eyes notice this most when reading, watching TV, working at the computer, driving or sewing because those are times when we blink less.

### **How Do I Treat Dry Eyes?**

There is no cure but there is treatment to control the problem. Your provider will usually prescribe either eye drops or ointment to keep the eyes moist, healthy, and comfortable.

### **The more your eyes water, the more you need artificial tears.**

Eye drops need to be used often, four times a day or more. Use the drops before you eyes feel bad. Most prescriptions are written for a year. Don't run out. Just get refills from the pharmacy.

If eye drops burn or sting it may mean you need to use them more often. If you have used the drops often and they still sting you may need a change in drops.

You can buy your own drops without a prescription. Be sure you buy a lubricant or artificial tears. The cheaper "get the red out" drops like Visine or Murine will make your eyes feel worse.

If you use eye drops more than 5 times a day, a drop without preservatives is better for your eyes. Some non-preserved drops are: **Gentest, Hypotears PF, Refresh Plus, Moisture Eyes, Refresh Tears, Tears Natural Free and Thera Tears.**

If you wear contact lens, use non-preserved artificial tears or contact lens rewetting drops.

If your provider prescribed ointment, put it in every night before you go to sleep. Use ointment by pulling down you lower eyelid and squeezing a small amount into the lower lid area. Close your eyes and gently rub the upper lid.

Sometimes extra thick tears are needed for very dry eyes. **Celluvisc and Cellufresh** are two types carried by our pharmacy.