Your eyelids do more than just keep light out when you want to sleep! They might seem simple at first glance, but your eyelids actually contain many different types of cells and structures that serve a variety of roles in the biology of your eyes. Therefore, proper care and cleaning of your eyelids is important for keeping your eyes healthy and comfortable.

Tears are secreted by specialized glands in your eyelids. Your tears keep your eyes moist and wash away irritating particles, allergens, pathogens, and pollutants. Your eyelids also secrete the lipid solution that forms a protective layer that keeps your tears from evaporating too quickly. Blinking wipes this liquid across your eyes and clears debris away. Infections, swelling, or blockages in your eyelids can interfere with these vital processes.

**How does your eyelids help your eyes?**

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There are a number of environmental factors, health conditions, and diseases that can cause irritated eyes. Here is a guide to the more common causes of eye irritation and the types of symptoms associated with each:

• **Blepharitis**: this is inflammation of the eyelid, characterized by swelling, redness, and soreness in your eyelids. Various factors can lead to blepharitis, such as viral, bacterial, or fungal infections, or a blockage in your eyelid’s glands.

• **Allergies**: allergens such as pollen or pet dander can trigger a particular type of reaction by your immune system, leading to itching, redness, watering, puffiness, or stinging in your eyes.

• **Dry eye disease**: commonly associated with other disorders, dry eye can develop when insufficient tears are produced or if they are evaporating too quickly. Symptoms include stinging, itching, or burning eyes, swollen eyelids, redness, or feeling like there is something stuck in your eyes.

• **Conjunctivitis**: also known as pink-eye, this arises from an inflammation of the conjunctival glands in your lower eyelids and is typically caused by an infection. Tell-tale signs are red or bloodshot eyes, swelling of the eyelids, and thick or sticky discharge which may stick the eyelashes together.

• **Demodicosis**: infestation with demodex mites, also known as eyelash mites. This condition can sometimes give rise to other disorders, including blepharitis, dry eye disease, madarosis (loose or misaligned eyelashes), dermatitis, and flaking skin or eyelash dandruff.

The best way to know what is causing your eye irritation, of course, is to visit your doctor or optician for an examination and diagnosis.

Fortunately, all of these types of eye irritation can be helped in the same way. Ocular hygiene is the key! Lubricating eye drops will work for temporary relief of dryness and discomfort, but keeping your eyes clean is the best way to eliminate the underlying causes of irritation. Using gentle cleansers or wipes on your eyes as part of your daily routine can keep your glands and ducts open and working properly. It can also help remove irritants like dust, pollen, and viruses.

Cliradex is a plant-based optical cleanser which can be used as part of your daily facial hygiene routine. It can help clear your eyes of pathogens and irritants and keep your glands unclogged. It contains 4-terpineol, a natural compound that comes from tea tree oil. This organic molecule has mite-killing activities.
Your diet has a major impact on all areas of your health, and your eyes and eyelids are no exception! Here is a list of foods that are good for the health of your eyes:

- **Carrots**: you may have heard people say that carrots will give you good eyesight. While they won’t give you super-vision, they do contain beta-carotene and vitamin A, both of which are important for eye health.
- **Yams**: like carrots, these veggies contain beta-carotene, a type of phytochemical produced by certain plants that gives them their orange coloring. This is beneficial for the cells in your eyes. Squash is also a good source of beta-carotene.
- **Seafood**: fish is an excellent source of “good fats” such as Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids which improve the production of your eyes’ protective lipid layer. Oysters are full of zinc, which helps transport vitamin A to your retinas.
- **Beans**: good sources of protein and fiber, beans are also a good source of zinc.
- **Fried foods**: junk foods like French fries and potato chips are filled with unhealthy fats like monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and linoleic acid. On top of being bad for your overall health, these increase your chances of developing macular degeneration.
- **Commercially-made cakes and cookies**: these are usually made with the bad fats mentioned above, as well as trans-fats that raise your cholesterol. Home-made pastries cooked with vegetable oil or margarine are also unhealthy; butter or canola oil are better alternatives.
- **Crackers**: snack crackers also tend to be filled with trans-fats. The resulting high cholesterol can stick in the delicate blood vessels in your eyes, harming your vision.
- **Candy**: sugary snacks, especially those containing high-fructose corn syrup, can raise your blood pressure and blood triglycerides, and increase your risk of developing diabetes. Both conditions can lead to damaged eyes.
- **Sugary drinks**: sodas and juices or teas loaded with sweeteners are one of our greatest sources of sugar, especially high-fructose corn syrup. Again, the disorders associated with a high-sugar diet can cause harm to the blood vessels in your eyes.

**Some foods are best avoided if you want to optimize your eye health. Here are five of the worst:**

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As discussed earlier, keeping your eyes clean is the best way to avoid eye and eyelid irritation in the first place. Here are some easy steps you can take for clean and healthy eyes.

1. **Wash your face with a gentle cleanser daily.** This helps keep irritants like dust, pollen, infectious microbes, and pollutants off of your face and away from your eyes. It is also good for keeping the pores in your eyelids clear and functional.

2. **Always wash your hands before touching your face.** It may be tempting to rub your eyes, but this may cause unwanted germs and irritants to get into your eyes.

3. **Keep your environment clean.** Cleaning your house and washing your clothes and bedding on a regular basis will keep allergens like mold and dust, and pathogens like viruses and demodex mites, at bay.

4. **Treat yourself to a massage.** Use a washcloth dampened with warm water to gently massage your eyelids on a regular basis. This will help clear clogs in your eyelid glands, plus it feels relaxing!

5. **Remove your makeup before going to bed.** Sleeping with makeup on your eyelids can clog your pores and promote infections. Use a makeup remover or gentle eye wipe to take off eyeshadow, eyeliner, and mascara.
You know full well how important, yet sensitive, your eyes are. Therefore, you should expect high quality ingredients in your eye care products; ingredients that effectively address your eye problems without causing any more themselves. Thankfully, such products exist.

Cliradex Light facial cleanser and towelettes were developed to provide a deep clean while being gentle enough to use long-term. They are formulated with 4-terpineol, a compound taken from tea tree oil, that has been proven to have many benefits for ocular health. What Cliradex products do not contain are ingredients that have been known to cause allergies and irritation.

Cliradex towelettes contain the optimal concentration of 4-terpineol to kill demodex mites while being safe enough to use for the length of time required to completely clear an infestation. Cliradex Light foaming cleanser contains a lower concentration of 4-terpineol and is ideal for your daily facial hygiene routine. Cliradex is gentle enough to use long-term on the delicate skin around your eyes. It's just want your eyes need!
REFERENCES


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