

9 Ways You Might Be Worsening Your Dry Eye Symptoms Every Day

You're miserable due to dry eye disease and you're experiencing symptoms just about every day. You've tried every artificial tear that's available over the counter, you could prepare a hot compress with your eyes closed and even purchased a humidifier! You're doing everything right- so what gives? Well, there are a ton of sneaky situations that can worsen dry eye symptoms and you're probably committing at least some of them every single day! Don't believe us? Below are a few of the ways you're actually exacerbating your own painful dry eye symptoms on a day-to-day basis without even realizing it.



meters away from the screen for 20 seconds, every 20 minutes)

1. You're looking up: Staring at a computer screen eight hours a day is bad enough without improper positioning of your screen. Always make sure to position computer screens below eye level so that it is only necessary to open a small portion of your eye, as opposed to having to gawk upwards at a highly positioned screen. Looking downward at your screen can help slow the evaporation of your tear film between blinks and help nix aggravating symptoms. (Oh, and for goodness' sake, look 20

2. You're not sleeping with your eyes (fully) closed: You could be suffering from lagophthalmos and not even know it! It's a more common condition than you may think- and it is sure to cause ocular discomfort.



3. You're going overboard with drops: Using eye drops correctly is key in soothing the pain dry eye causes. But did you know that using drops is not as fool proof as it seems? If you're applying drops incorrectly, you may not be getting their full benefit. Additionally, be careful to check expiration dates and don't overuse them to avoid building a tolerance.

4. You're eating the wrong foods: You've heard the phrase 'you are what you eat' before. But what does it have to do with dry eye disease? Well, everything! A balanced diet plays an important role in ocular health. Nutrients like healthy fats are imperative when it comes to maintaining a healthy tear film. [Supplement with omega-3's](#) or eat more oily fish like mackerel and tuna to help stave off dry eye symptoms.

5. You always wear contact lenses: Contact lenses (specifically soft ones) are made from hydrophilic plastics that contain water. This can be troublesome for dry eye sufferers because the more water a soft contact lens contains, the more prone it is to dehydration. In fact, when water evaporates from the front surface of the lens, the lens responds by absorbing water from your natural tear film, which causes those itchy, uncomfortable, dry eyes. It could be helpful to occasionally swap contact lenses for glasses on days that your eyes feel particularly sensitive.



6. You use harsh soaps: Washing your face and removing any makeup prior to bed is important. Of course, it is equally as important to use the right cleansers and makeup removers. Mascara can be stubborn to remove and it can lead to eye infections and discomfort in the morning if not removed properly. So, be sure to use a quality remover (try Clinique's Naturally Gentle Eye Makeup Remover) and don't just swipe on the product carelessly. Always place a cotton ball that's been soaked in remover on your lids, hold for a minute to dissolve and then wipe away. Follow up by using a *gentle* cleanser like Cetaphil or Spectro Gel (ditch any harsh, expensive cleansers or heavy scrubs- you don't need them!). Harsh exfoliates often contain chemicals and irritants that can worsen sensitive peepers!

7. You're blasting the air conditioner: We realize we're into the dog days now, but you might want to think twice before blasting your AC to stay cool. Excessive air movement tends to dry out eyes and air conditioners and ceiling fans can be problematic for dry eye sufferers. Particularly when in the car, be sure to point the AC fans away from your face if you must use them.

8. You're parched: Five words: *you're NOT drinking enough water!* Avoid becoming dehydrated (your eyes feel the effects, too!) by drinking half your body weight in ounces of water each and every day. Extra points for avoiding tap water and drinking filtered or spring water.



9. You're lighting up: Hopefully you are already aware that smoking can cause a bevy of health issues and exacerbate dry eye disease. If you don't smoke, pay extra attention to steer clear of people who are lighting up. Cigarette smoke contains a number of carcinogens and can worsen dry eye symptoms pretty quickly.

Want to learn about advanced Dry Eye Testing and how to better manage your Dry Eye Disease? [Contact the doctors at DryEyeKC.com](#)

