

EYELID DERMATITIS (ECZEMA)

Eyelid dermatitis is a common skin condition affecting the skin on the eyelids and around the eyes. The affected areas are red, dry, scaly and often inflamed and itchy. Dermatitis and eczema mean the same thing and refer to the irritated appearance of the skin.

Eyelid dermatitis is a problem, which primarily occurs in women. It develops because the skin on the eyelids is the thinnest skin on the body and is most easily irritated. It is usually not a specific allergy to a product but is often related to the irritation, which develops when eye make-up is removed. It is more common when the skin is dry to begin with, such as in people with inherited forms of eczema or in the wintertime. In addition, forced air heating produces low relative humidity and this predisposes the skin to irritation. It is important to realize that it may not be one specific product, which is producing the problem, but a combination of all different products together along with the current environmental conditions.

Eyelid dermatitis is treated with a prescription cream, which is rubbed in twice a day to the affected areas. As the condition improves the cream can be used less frequently such as once a day, then once every other day and then to discontinue it completely. Although the skin may look normal, it often takes a month or two for it totally to heal underneath. During the initial stages of healing the skin is still prone to develop the irritation.

I do not recommend that you switch all of your cosmetic products but, if you can cut down the frequency of eye make-up use at least temporarily, this will help the skin to heal completely. It may be helpful to switch the product used to remove the eye make-up with.

Because this type of problem occurs due to a combination of factors, it may be a one-time event and it may never return. It is not uncommon, however, for dermatitis such as this to come back to a small degree. If the problem continues despite therapy, it may be necessary to do further testing on your skin to see if there are specific allergies. If you have any other questions regarding this condition, please do not hesitate to ask me.