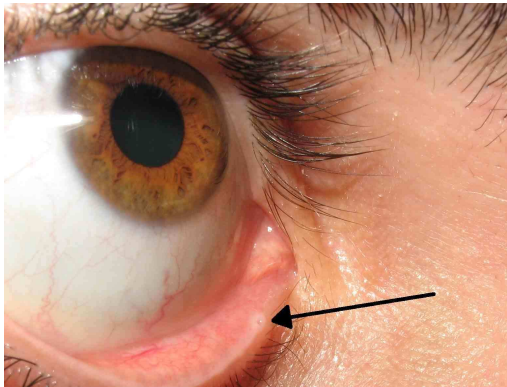


Watery Eyes – Punctal Stenosis - Narrow Tear Ducts – 3 Snip Punctoplasty operation



Watery eyes are common condition. We all know that our eyes produced tears to lubricate and moisten the eyes. However not everyone knows where the tears go! There are in fact small drainage cans from the inner corner of your eye which drain down into the back of the nose. This is why when the eyes water excessively one often has to blow one's nose because the tears drain into the nose. Normally the small amount of fluid the drains down the lacrimal ducts into

the nose is so small that his had absorbed and swallowed without us noticing. The opening into these tear ducts are right in the corner of the eye by the nose one in the upper lid and one in the lower lid. These tiny openings as small as a pinhead can on occasions become blocked or close off completely. This would be like your sink plughole coming blocked and naturally the eyes will then fill up with water and most likely overflow with tears raining down one's cheeks.

There are several causes watery eyes the first being where too much tears are produced due to the eye's been inflamed. The second where the opening to the tear ducts is blocked otherwise known as punctal stenosis and the third one where the lacrimal ducts within the nose have become blocked.

The treatment for punctual stenosis is initially dilatation with the punctual dilator which serves simply to stretch the punctum. This may well produce an improvement of the watering this of the eyes but does have the tendency to recur.

Should the watering us persist due to punctual stenosis than the traditional treatment is a small operation undertaken under local anaesthetic called a three snip operation. As the name implies this simply involves three small cuts to open the tear duct. In studies the success rate of this is around 92%. A review of this operation and results can be found on this website

<http://www.nature.com/eye/journal/v19/n1/full/6701415a.html>

After the operation it is most unlikely that the punctum will close off again and I should no longer be watery.

Nicholas Lee 2012

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