

## **What is blepharitis?**

Blepharitis is inflammation of the edge of the eyelid.

## **What are some of the signs and symptoms of blepharitis?**

Eyes may sting, burn, or itch. Patients typically blink or rub their eyes more often than usual. Allergies may be blamed mistakenly. There may be crusts on the eyelashes. In extreme cases there is redness at the inside edge of the lid.

## **What problems does blepharitis cause?**

Blepharitis causes chronic irritation of the eyes and lids, which can be very aggravating. Blepharitis also puts patients at increased risk for other forms of eyelid inflammation, such as stye and chalazion. Inflammation may also spread to the conjunctiva (the lining of the eyelid and the covering of the white of the eye) and the cornea (the clear dome at the front of the eye, through which we see).

## **How is blepharitis treated?**

There are a variety of treatments which may be used, alone or in combination:

- 1) Clean the eyelids and lashes - use Johnson's Baby shampoo, on a clean finger or washcloth, to clean the closed lids and lashes, eliminating harmful bacteria and removing crusts and debris.
- 2) Warm compresses - use a warm washcloth over the eyes for 5 minutes, 3 times a day. The "Bed Buddy", a sock-like heating pad which is warmed in the microwave, may work even better. Heat improves blood flow in the area and helps the body fight the inflammation.
- 3) Antibiotic ointment - use antibiotic eye ointment on the eyelids and lashes at bedtime for several weeks. In some cases ointment on the eye itself may be helpful.