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## The Cure for Dry Eyes

By Fred Cicetti  
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Fred Cicetti is a freelance writer who specializes in health. He has been writing professionally since 1963.

**Learn more about  
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Tears are necessary for overall eye health and clear vision. Dry eyes are common in people older than 50. A lack of tears is more common among women, especially after menopause.

The treatment for dry eyes depends upon the cause.

First, physicians have to determine if a disease is the underlying cause. Then the disease is treated.

If a medicine you're taking for another condition is causing dry eye, your doctor may recommend switching to a different drug.

If contact lenses are giving you dry eye, your eye care practitioner may recommend another type of lens, or reducing the number of hours you wear your lenses.

There are procedures by eyecare professionals to plug the drainage holes at the inner corners of the eyelids where tears drain from the eye into the nose. Lacrimal plugs, also called punctal plugs, can be inserted temporarily or permanently. In some cases, a simple surgery, called punctal cautery, is recommended to permanently close the drainage holes.

If other methods do not give you adequate dry eye relief, your ophthalmologist may suggest that you use a prescription medication. One such medication, cyclosporine, works by stimulating tear production.

Steroid eyedrops may also be used, but are generally not recommended for long-term treatment. Other treatment options may include ointments, gels and inserts.

Omega fatty acids may help relieve dry eyes symptoms. Omega fatty acids are available in foods and in supplements. Always talk to your doctor before taking any food supplements.

A new study published in the peer-reviewed journal *Cornea* showed that *HydroEye*, a nutritional supplement containing omega fatty acids, improved dry-eye symptoms. The study, which evaluated 38 post-menopausal women with tear dysfunction in both eyes, was conducted by two world-renowned dry-eye researchers: Stephen Pflugfelder, MD and John Sheppard, MD.

"Prior to this study," said Dr. Pflugfelder, "clinical evidence showing that nutritional supplements were beneficial in treating dry eye was scarce. However, within three months, the group treated with *HydroEye* showed statistically significant improvements in irritation symptoms of dry eye, and no progression of ocular surface inflammation or corneal irregularity. The placebo group's dry eye symptoms actually worsened over the six-month testing period."

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