**Watery Eyes - Causes & Treatment (Doc Approved)**

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Amidst the current pandemic crisis which is hovering all around us certain eye issues in children are flaring up, if not dealt with at the right time. One of the things is watery eyes. This is something I face on an everyday basis in online consults and can be managed at home by following certain basic guidelines. Knowledge of the various reasons and their symptoms would help you seek medical attention in time.

Watery eyes or epiphora is a condition where the child has repeated tearing of eyes, making it look as if they are weeping.

Causes of Watery Eyes & The Treatment

**1. Blocked tear duct**

This condition is commonly seen in infants, also known as Congenital Nasolacrimal duct obstruction. In this condition, the opening of the tear duct is not appropriately formed, obstructing the drainage of tears, and resulting in watery eyes. This may occur in one eye or both and may be intermittent.

**Symptoms:**

* Tear pooling at the corner of eyes
* White or yellow discharge like collection at the inside of the eye
* Red or itching eyelid skin due to repeated rubbing of eyes
* Swollen or red eye due to infection

**Treatment:**

Most of the cases resolve spontaneously by 6 to 12months of age. In some, it causes persistent symptoms and nasal massage has shown to speed up the process.  Otherwise, the child is advised a probing procedure between the age of 12 to 18 months.

**Method of Nasolacrimal Duct Massage (Compression)**

The method of massage plays a major role in the resolution of the condition. Place one hand to support the head and use the other hand thumb or forefinger on the region where the inside of the eye and nasal bone meet. Compress firmly. This might help the pus or fluid that is trapped in the tear sac to move due to the pressure put by the finger. You may try about fifteen strokes, three to four times a day for several weeks.

**Common Mistakes:**

* Improper massage and prolonged usage of eye drops.
* Topical antibiotic eye drops are not the mainstay treatment. It is just an adjuvant to avoid infection. Use only for a week or so, if you see a yellowish discharge. Wipe the discharge repeatedly to avoid lid infection.
* Discontinuation of massage - Don’t stop massage until your child is one year old. Most parents stop massage when they see that watering/ discharge has stopped. This makes the condition recur every few days.

**2. Allergies**

Watery eyes can also be a symptom of allergy. This is mostly due to external factors like dust, mites, pollens, grass, food or pets. It is generally associated with itchy and red eyes. Sometimes it may be associated with sneezing and a runny nose.

**Treatment:**

* Avoid exposure to dust and pollens in the air by wearing protective glasses.
* Use lubricating eye drops 3 to 4 times a day (available over the counter) for a week. If symptoms persist, kindly see your eye doctor.

**3. Dry Eyes**

Sometimes watery eyes can happen due to dry eye syndrome. It seems very unlikely, but dry eye can stimulate the overproduction of tears as a protective response. In this pandemic, kids are doing online schooling, which has increased digital strain, which indirectly causes dry eye. It may be associated with a burning sensation and repeated rubbing of the eyes.

**Treatment:**

* Regulate the screen time and take frequent breaks. Follow the 20-20-20 rule (Every 20 minutes look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds)
* Use lubricating eye drops 3 to 4 times a day for a week. If symptoms persist, Kindly see your eye doctor.

**4. Conjunctivitis**

Also commonly called as red/pink eye, this generally happens due to a bacterial or viral infection. It is generally associated with watery or pus-like discharge, a painful swollen eye, accompanied with fever and sore throat sometimes.

**Treatment:**

Consult your eye doctor immediately. Your doctor may advise you certain antibiotic drops but if you see no relief in symptoms, Kindly do a physical consult to rule out a viral infection or any other cause.

**5. Eye Injury**

Children are prone to injuries while playing. Any form of injury would lead to teary eyes. If tearing persists even after few hours of injury, consult your eye doctor. Injuries over the cornea are generally painful with foreign body sensation and the inability to open the eyes.

**Treatment:**

Mild scratch heals on its own and the child is non-irritable in a few minutes.

**We hope this helps you address any eye infection concerns at home.**