Dry Eye: Patient Education

👀 Dry Eye for Patients 👀

Our eyes normally produce tears to keep themselves moist. However, if something disrupts tear production, we can end up with dry eyes!

Dry eyes can cause symptoms like:

- Stinging and burning
- Blurred vision
- Scratchy or gritty feeling like something is in the eye
- Excess tearing

Dry eyes may be caused by:

- Certain medications
- Health conditions such as Sjögren's syndrome and rosacea
- Visually intensive tasks like reading books, using digital screens or driving for long periods of time (leads to decreased blinking)

If you have symptoms:

1. Think of the 20-20-20 rule! For every 20 minutes of screen time, look at least 20 ft away for 20 seconds. Blink frequently and consider using lubricant eye drops. Avoid any eye drops with a redness reliever or allergy component.
2. If you sleep with a fan on or other moving air in your face, use a gel drop or eye ointment to help keep your eyes moist overnight.
3. Considering applying a warm compress to the eyes or adding foods containing omega-3 fatty acids to your diet in order to stimulate the eye's natural oil production, decreasing dry eye symptoms.
4. Be patient with your body! Dry eye is a chronic condition requiring lifestyle changes and sometimes medical treatment to maintain eye health.
5. If symptoms persist, seek out care with your primary doctor or an eye specialist!

References:

https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-dry-eye

https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-is-eye-strain