

Punctal Plugs Consent Form

Condition and Proposed Treatment

My optometrist has diagnosed me with dry eye syndrome. Typical symptoms of this condition include burning and watering and a sensation like something is in the eye. In many cases dry eyes are caused by the body's failure to produce enough tears. Severe cases of dry eye may lead to infection and in rare cases, permanent loss of best corrected vision. Blocking the tear drainage system with punctal or intracanalicular (tear duct) plugs may improve symptoms by keeping more tears in the eye. The plugs are small rod like inserts that are placed (using forceps and anesthetic eye drops) into the eye's natural tear drainage system. The plugs are made of an absorbable or non absorbable synthetic material. The patient is responsible for disclosing any sensitivities or allergies.

Alternatives

1. Artificial tears or ointment – Lubrication increases moisture on the surface of the eye. Depending on severity, these over-the-counter drops and ointments may be applied several times daily for maximal comfort.
2. Restasis – Used twice daily, this prescription eye drop increases production of the body's own tears. (Not available in Canada at this time)
3. Surgical tear drainage closure – The tear drainage pathway may be surgically occluded (closed) by thermal cautery (heat) or ligation (suture). These methods should be considered permanent.
4. Omega-3 (Fish Oil) / Flax Seed Oil – Fish Oil: usually 3x/day as per formulation (~100-300mg EPA & 50-200mg DHA). Flax seed: 1000mg of oil taken 3 times a day. Both have been shown to be effective dry eye treatment in some patients in which an inflammatory component may contributing to the dryness.
5. No Treatment – I may choose to do nothing and tolerate the symptoms of my dry eye condition.

Risks

1. Infection - The punctal plug is a foreign material and may be associated with infection around the plug. Infections can be treated with antibiotics and removal of the plug.
2. Excessive Tearing – In some cases, plugs may cause an overflow of tears. Your doctor may decide to remove the plugs in this situation.
3. Irritation – The exposed end of the punctal plug may cause irritation and need to be replaced with a different size plug or removed.
4. Loss of the Plug – The punctal plug may fall out or need to be replaced. There may be an additional replacement cost.
5. Retention of plug or permanent scarring of the tear duct – Although rare, plugs may become lodged in the tear drainage pathway (canaliculus) or cause scarring. Surgery may be necessary to re-establish tear drainage. In rare cases, chronic excessive tearing can result.

Note: The chances of developing the above risks are not known and no controlled studies have been completed as to the knowledge of your practitioner. Risks and complications that are considered to be unforeseeable, remote or not yet known, are not discussed.

* The above risks *may* be reduced, but are still possible, with the use of absorbable plugs.

Consent For Treatment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above and have had the opportunity to discuss this information with my doctor to my satisfaction. I consent to the insertion of punctal plugs in the: RIGHT lower upper LEFT lower upper eyelid(s) at a cost of

\$150 – for the 3 month temporary Ultra Plugs (1 plug each eye) or,
\$300 – permanent Smart Plugs/Parasol (1 plug each eye) [If temporary plugs have been inserted at our clinic we will put \$100 towards the permanent plugs]

I am also aware that my symptoms may only be partially alleviated or not alleviated at all after insertion of the plugs as Dry Eye Syndrome is a multi-factorial condition.

Patient Signature

Date