

Policy statement: Routine prescribing of Products for dry eyes should occur following a clinical assessment and diagnosis

Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group (NCCG) policy statements have been developed to ensure appropriate use of NHS resources and to promote high quality evidence-based cost-effective prescribing. They support the implementation of the CCG's clinical and financial responsibilities

Dry eye syndrome is a common condition that occurs when the eyes do not produce enough tears, or the tears evaporate too quickly. This is usually characterised by irritation, soreness, burning or intermittent blurred vision. It is often difficult to diagnose dry eye syndrome definitively in its mild form because of inconsistent correlation between reported symptoms and clinical signs as well as the poor specificity and/or sensitivity of clinical tests. As most dry eye conditions have a chronic course, repeated observation and reporting of symptoms over time will allow an appropriate clinical diagnosis of dry eyes in most cases.

Recommendation for GP

Patients should be encouraged to self-care and buy dry eye products over the counter from their local community pharmacy when not related to a clinical condition. If the prescribing of dry eye products is clinically indicated for mild to dry eyes Clinitas carbomer® is recommended on FP10. (Although, not suitable for contact lens wearers). Patients presenting with dry eyes should be signposted to an Optician where appropriate for further examination.

Recommendations (advice for patients)

- Stopping medication that exacerbates dry eyes, such as topical and systemic antihistamines.
- Use a humidifier to moisten ambient air.
- If smoking tobacco, stopping smoking may help alleviate symptoms
- If using a computer for long periods, ensure that the monitor is at or below eye level, avoid staring at the screen and take frequent breaks to close/blink eyes

Exclusions

- Patients with diagnosed medical conditions related to dry eyes e.g. severe chronic eye problems
- Inability of the eyes to produce tears following surgery
- If there is an underlying condition (suspected or known) that can cause dry eyes, consider referral for specialist assessment.

Further information NHS Choices [Click here](#)