

How Lipiflow can provide you with a more beneficial treatment – Part 1

Last week was an exciting week for The Dry Eye Clinic; after patiently waiting for all the building work to be completed, we finally moved into our brand new premises. The new spacious treatment rooms allow us to continue giving the best service to all of our patients, but in a more relaxing atmosphere than was previously possible.

For those of you who suffer from chronic dry eyes and are looking for a dry eyes remedy, you should consider the [Lipiflow treatment](#) that we offer. I would like to explain over the next few blogs how Lipiflow can provide you with a more beneficial treatment than those you may have previously tried at home. So this month we are going to be focussing on the 'heat' aspect of the treatment.

You may wonder why heat is required in the first place? Let's start with a brief explanation of the reason many people experience problems.

The tear film is made up of three layers. The outer lipid layer is extremely important in preventing the underlying 'watery' layer from evaporating. Any compromise to this outer layer can lead to an unstable tear film and symptoms of dry eyes.

The lipid layer is produced by glands in the upper and lower eyelids. These glands frequently become blocked, resulting in a reduced amount of lipid being released. The effect of this can be a thin, insufficient lipid layer, causing the tears to evaporate too quickly resulting in symptoms of burning, itching and the sensation of grittiness – symptoms many of you unfortunately experience on a daily basis.

Heat therapy can help to melt the contents of the gland to alleviate the blockage and allow a better flow of lipid to be produced. Many of you may have tried some of the heat therapies available for home use eg., hot flannels, eye bags, heated bean bags etc. These certainly can be of help, but there are some limitations to their effectiveness. Firstly, they do not maintain their temperature and cool down too quickly to have any sustained effect. Secondly, the heat can only be applied to the outer eyelid and therefore isn't targeting the correct area where the glands lie. In addition the eyelid tissue itself, has insulating properties further reducing the effect of the treatment. Now fortunately, with the development of Lipiflow these problems have been addressed. The system applies constant, controlled, directional heat to the inner surface of the eyelid while protecting the rest of the eye with an insulated shield, thus providing precise, thermally controlled, safe heat to the targeted area. This, in addition to the application of pressure, facilitates the release of secretion from the obstructed gland helping to improve the lipid layer and relieve the symptoms of dry eyes.

We have been seeing some excellent results at our clinic, I feel privileged to have this state-of-the-art equipment at my disposal, to provide the most up-to-date and effective treatment available to our patients.