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## WHAT CAUSES EYE WRINKLES?

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During our patient consultations, we are often asked about wrinkles under the eyes. More specifically, what causes aging skin s like crows feet and smile lines to appear on our face, can we prevent eye wrinkles from forming as we age, and are there any treatments we can perform after they've formed?

There are many different factors that are involved in the sagging and stretching of our skin. As we age, the thin and sensitive skin around the eyes is particularly susceptible, meaning that this area tends to be one of the most common areas for wrinkles to form. We'll cover the most common causes of eye wrinkles in this article, but ultimately, it all comes down to the breakdown of elastin fibers and collagen in your skin. Our body just isn't able to replace these compounds, which are responsible for keeping our skin supple and elastic.

But never fear! There are things that you can do to protect your skin, maintain your elastin and collagen levels, and reduce the wear that causes the skin around your eyes to wrinkle. Let's look at some of the major causes of eye wrinkles and how to prevent them.

## KEY CAUSES OF EYE WRINKLES

### FREQUENT SQUINTING

In essence, wrinkling your skin causes eye wrinkles – it seems obvious, but a lot of the little choices you make during the day can cause you to put more wear and strain on your skin – especially around the eyes. Squinting regularly during the day is a great example and key cause for crows feet especially.

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Not wearing sunglasses on a sunny day, sitting closer than 1.5-2 feet from a computer screen or even just bad eyesight are all reasons that cause you to squint more than normal, putting undue stress on the sensitive skin around your eyes. So, get sunglasses and go to the eye doctor, you'll thank yourself later! Even a big smile will cause the skin around your eyes to wrinkle, but we don't recommend you stop doing that!

## AGGRESSIVE RUBBING OR TOUCHING OF YOUR SKIN

The skin around your eyes is very thin so rubbing it aggressively when you get tired can easily stretch and wrinkle in unnatural ways that will increase its propensity for wrinkles. This goes for any action that causes wear on this delicate skin. Removing eye makeup, for instance, often involves vigorously rubbing the skin, which can cause broken blood vessels or puffiness.

To prevent this, apply your makeup remover and let it get to work dissolving your makeup before you scrub, then gently rub to remove the makeup. This can even be a factor when applying things like eyeliner – find something that glides on smoothly and evenly, so that you don't have to tug on your delicate eye skin to get it on.

## SLEEPING ON YOUR SIDE OR STOMACH

With half of your face buried in the pillow for many hours at a time, sleeping on your side or stomach leaves your face unnaturally wrinkled. See sleep lines in the morning? Yep, they will eventually turn to wrinkles over years of restful nights. Consider sleeping on your back to prevent this abuse. If you have trouble, there are pillows specially designed to make it more comfortable for you.

## SUN EXPOSURE

Sun exposure is one of the main reasons that collagen and elastin fibers break down and causes many of the skin changes that we associate with aging. It's important to be mindful of any time you spend in the sun, but be especially wary during peak sun hours (10am-4pm). If you can't stay out of the sun during these times, be sure to wear sunscreen and a hat.

Don't forget about the car! Just because your fully enclosed doesn't mean you can stop worrying about the sun's UV rays. A study showed that in the United States **skin cancers are more common on the left side of the body**, presumably due to increased exposure to the sun driving on the left-hand side. So wear your sunscreen and hat on your daily commute or long road trips!

## OVER-APPLICATION OF SKINCARE PRODUCTS

Everyone has their special cocktail of skincare products that they use in hopes of staying forever young, but be wary of adding too many products to your routine. The over-application of too many products can cause skin irritation and inflammation that will exacerbate the aging of your skin. This applies to skin cleaning products as well.

Using harsh soaps and scrubbing your skin too roughly will strip your face of its natural oils and cause undue wear and tear. Remember that less is more! Wash your face gently, with a simple, gentle cleanser like the **Swan Cleanser** from our Swan Skin Care line.

## DON'T SMOKE!

We don't have to tell you that smoking isn't good for you. You know that already. But what you may not know is that consistently being surrounded by smoke will dry out your skin and have a lasting effect on the health of your skin. Also, when smoking you often find yourself squinting to keep the smoke out of your eyes, which is another bad habit for the health of your eye skin.

## ALLERGIES, INFLAMMATION, AND SWELLING

Is your eyelid skin loose and crepey? Do you wake up with **puffy eyes**? Do you have dark circles under your eyes? These are the types of changes that you get when you have chronic eyelid inflammation and swelling from allergies. The irritation of chronic inflammation and the stretching of your skin from swelling can cause the most damage to the delicate collagen and elastin fibers in the skin around your eyes. If this describes you, it's important to address this as soon as possible or no your loose, crepey skin will return despite a short-term fix to your eyelid skin.

It's best if you can avoid exposure to things that trigger your allergies but that is often hard to figure out. Here are some other suggestions that help most people.

One thing most people overlook is how your pillow can affect your allergies. Your eyes are buried in your pillow for hours every night, leaving allergens with plenty of time to cause havoc.

We recommend:

- Switching to a hypoallergenic pillow
- Washing your hypoallergenic pillow in hot water twice a year (more often during allergy season)
- Getting a dust mite cover for your pillow
- Washing your pillowcases every week in hot water with a perfume free detergent, avoiding fabric softeners
- Washing your hair before bed after spending time outside
- Closing windows during allergy season
- Taking off your shoes when you come in from outside to avoid bringing allergens in the house and on your carpets.
- In addition to the list above, you may consider a hepa filter, allergy eye drops, nose spray and oral antihistamines.

Another factor that causes inflammation around the eyes is your diet. We recommend limiting the amount of dairy, gluten, soy and peanuts in your diet and increasing the consumption of **anti-inflammatory foods** like fresh fruits and vegetables.

# HOW TO PREVENT EYE WRINKLES

So, now that we've looked at all of the key causes, let's recap and talk about how to prevent eye wrinkles from happening.

1. Don't squint! Wear sunglasses, maintain proper distance from screens and wear glasses if you need them!
2. Be careful with your skin. Don't rub it aggressively when removing makeup, or apply your makeup with too much vigor.
3. Take care of your pillow and consider sleeping on your back.
4. Stay out of the sun, and wear sunscreen and a hat when you're in it.
5. Take it easy with skin care products. Keep it simple, and use only the most gentle products.
6. Don't smoke!
7. Drink plenty of water to keep your body and skin clear and moisturized.
8. Take extra precautions during allergy season to avoid chronic inflammation of the delicate skin around your eyes.

## HOW TO TREAT EYE WRINKLES

Ok, so now we've talked about how to prevent eye wrinkles, but the reality is that some fine lines and wrinkles are inevitable as we age. So what can we do to treat eye wrinkles when they do appear?

### AT HOME EYE WRINKLE TREATMENTS

Take good care of your skin with a gentle, non-drying cleanser. Protect it from UV rays with a good sunscreen 365 days a year. Use a topical antioxidant, like Vitamin C, to neutralize free radicals that can cause damage. Stimulate your skin to repair damage with Vitamin A (retinol, retinaldehyde or tretinoin.) Retinol is a milder, over the counter version of tretinoin, a prescription cream that is often used for the treatment of wrinkles.

### PROFESSIONAL WRINKLE TREATMENTS

There are many great resurfacing treatments available that will remove old, damaged tissue and rough skin and stimulate the growth of new skin and the production of collagen and elastin. Traditional chemical peels cannot be used on the sensitive skin around your eyes, but other treatments like microdermabrasion and laser resurfacing can yield great results!

**Dermal fillers** are another solution for reducing the wrinkles in the face and around the eyes. They work by replacing some of the lost volume under your skin, filling in wrinkles and giving your skin and face a vibrant youthful look. These treatments are temporary, requiring reapplication every few months, and many are also completely reversible. For more information on dermal fillers, [check out the guide to dermal fillers on our site.](#)



Treatments with **Botox or Dysport** are another professionally administered temporary treatment for eye wrinkles. These compounds relax the muscles of your face, softening wrinkles that are caused by facial expressions like smiling or frowning.

*Have other questions about preventing or treating eye wrinkles? Eyes are our specialty, we have many years of experience in helping our patients to improve the way they look and feel about the area around their eyes. We'd love to answer any questions that you have, or even see you for a **consultation**!*

Categorised in: **Botox, Dermal Fillers, Health and Beauty**