

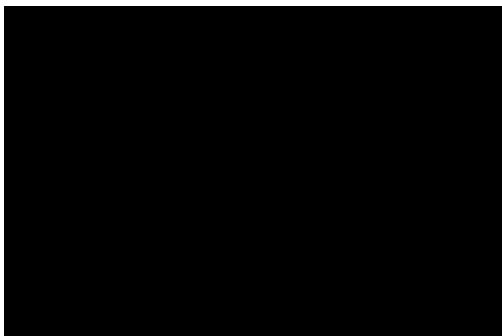
Blocked Tear Duct

Dr. Orathai Chansanti , Ophthalmologist

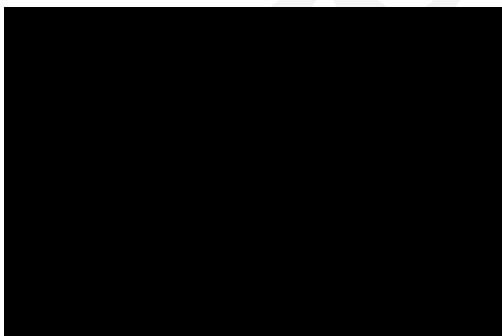
After birth, the infants lacrimal duct may be blocked up, but it usually clears out within a first few weeks. If the obstruction fails to resolve, it may leads to a condition called Blocked Tear Duct, which found around 1.75 to 6% of full-term infants. This happens because the end of the lacrimal duct in the sinus canal is much narrowed.

What are the symptoms of Blocked Tear Duct?

Primary symptoms are over flow of tears, like after crying. Some people may have eye inflamed together with having secretions. This disease is often found after birth, and improved by using the eye drops. Unfortunately, its not completely cured. The eyes with more secretions will have more chances to increase diseases in the lacrimal sac and this will lead to inflammation and become abscess under the lacrimal sac. Blocked tear duct may be at one or both eyes.



This picture shows blocked tear duct in a child. The secretions are at the edge of the eyelid and eye lashes.



This picture shows blocked tear duct in a child, that is infected and spreading to the lacrimal sac, finally caused inflammation, pain, swelling, redness and abscess.

In case of suspected a blocked tear duct, this should be examined by an ophthalmologist for diagnosis. The simple method is the dye disappearance test, The examiner instills fluorescein into each eye and then observes the tear. Persistence of dye after 5 minutes indicates a blocked tear

duct. The other method is using saline or sterile water irrigation. Reflux of irrigation fluid indicates a blocked tear duct.

When a blocked tear duct is diagnosed, the doctors normally advise to gently massage in the area of lacrimal sac. The correct massage manner is important, it will help to open the blockage and clear out the lacrimal duct. If the obstruction persists for a long time, this may lead to infection. The massage should be done every day and massage several times a day for 5 - 10 minutes. In case of secretions remained, antibiotic eye drops will be occasionally used.

Most obstructions open spontaneously within 4 - 6 weeks after birth. Approximately 90% of blocked tear duct resolve in the first year of life.

Other treatments, such as probing and intubation, will be considered in the following cases: