



Vision Alert

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New Treatments for Dry Eyes

The FDA recently approved the first in a series of new medications designed to treat the underlying cause of dry eye in many patients. Restasis (cyclosporine) by Allergan pharmaceuticals is now approved for the treatment of dry eye. Restasis works by inhibiting inflammatory cell responses in the mucous membranes lining the eyes. Many cases of dry eye are secondary to inflammatory processes that reduce the production of tears. Restasis has been shown in controlled clinical trials to increase tear production vs. a placebo tear drop. Restasis must be used for prolonged periods of time (up to a few months) before any substantial reduction of symptoms associated with dry eye are perceived by patients. It does not permanently cure dry eye, but must be used on an ongoing basis to maintain its therapeutic effect.

Punctum plugs are the only long term and permanent treatment for dry eye caused by reduced tear film production. These tiny inserts are gently placed in the opening in the eyelids that allow tears to drain and leave the eye. When inserted, the punctum plugs act by reducing the rate at which tears drain out of the eye therefore increasing the total tear volume present on the eye's surface at any given point in time. The insertion procedure is totally painless and takes only minutes to perform. Your doctors at NSVC have treated hundreds on patients with puntum plugs with great success. Contact your NSVC eye doctor to see if you might benefit from punctum plug therapy.