

BLEPHAROSPASM

Definition

The repetitive contraction of eyelid muscles in a rhythmic fashion. In some instances, the eyelid may repeatedly close or attempt to close.

Causes, incidence, and risk factors

The most common causes of muscle twitching in the eyelid are fatigue or stress. Once the spasms begin, they may continue intermittently for a day to more than a week, and then disappear. Most people experience this type of eyelid twitch on occasion and find it extremely annoying. It usually stops suddenly, without you noticing.

More severe contractions with closure of the eyelid are thought to be caused by irritation of the surface of the eye (cornea) or the membranes lining the eyelids (conjunctival irritation). This type is not as common as the more minor type of lid twitching.

Prevention

Most cases are not preventable.

Symptoms

The affected person experiences repetitive twitching or spasms of the eyelid, usually the upper lid.

Signs and tests

Examination by an ophthalmologist is indicated for severe spasms and lid closure.

Treatment and Prognosis

The condition usually disappears without any treatment. Full resolution is expected within a few days.

Complications

Permanent eye injury from unrecognized cornea injury (rare) is possible.

Calling your doctor

Call your eye doctor (ophthalmologist) if you experience eyelid twitching that does not go away in one week.