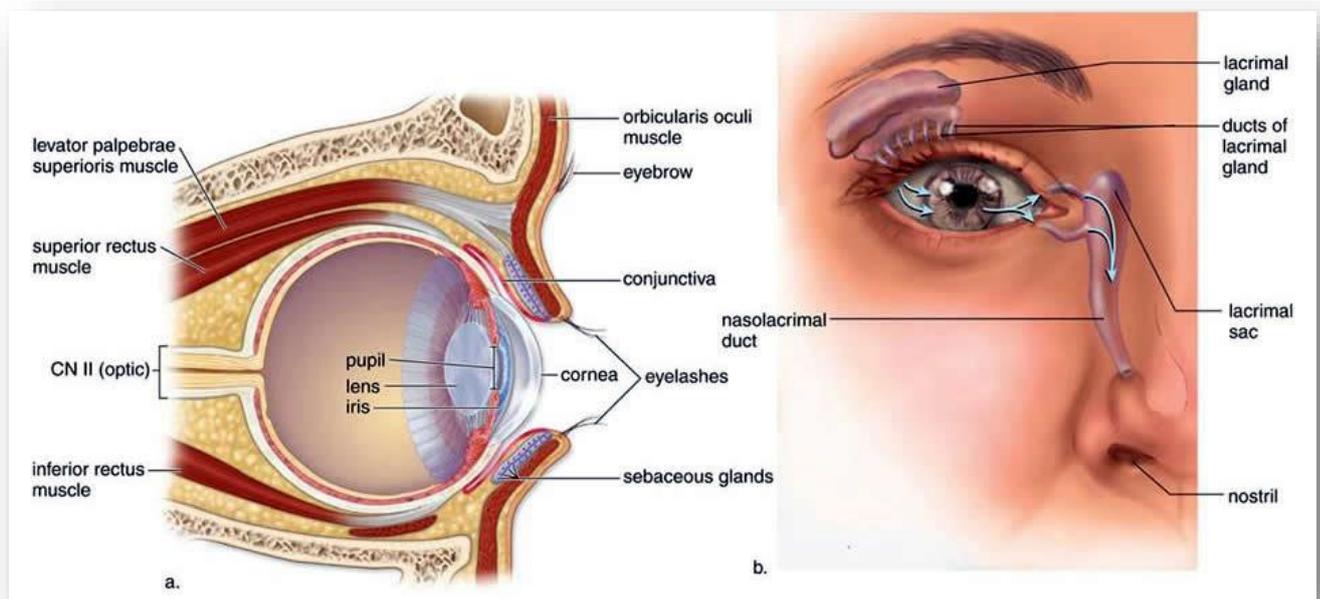


Watery Eye (Epiphora)

What are tears?

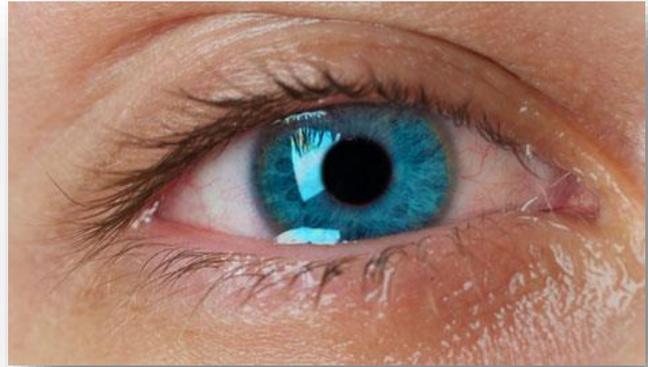
- Your tears are a mixture of water, salt, protein and mucus
- They are continually produced to keep the eye moist and healthy
- Tears originate in a gland underneath the eyelid called the lacrimal gland
- When you blink normally your eyelids move those tears across your cornea to the puncta, little openings at the inner part of your eyelids
- After entering the puncta your tears travel through small collecting ducts called the lacrimal canals, or upper and lower canaliculus, into the lacrimal sac
- They finally pass through another small duct called the nasolacrimal duct into your nose then to your throat.
- Meantime the process has started again up in the lacrimal gland and more tears are produced



What are watery eyes?

- Watery eyes can be as minor as a nuisance or they can be an indication of a more serious problem.

- Tears are necessary for the lubrication of the eyes and to wash away particles and foreign substances in or around the eyes.
- Excessive tearing can result in watery eyes, however, which is not good.
- The medical term for watery eyes is *epiphora*, which simply means increased tearing.
- Epiphora has many causes, and there are many ways to alleviate the symptoms.



- Epiphora happens one of two ways:

1. either the tear drainage duct is not functioning properly or
2. the eye is producing more tears than necessary.

- You may have noticed that infants have unusually teary eyes.
- This is because newborns do not have fully developed tear ducts.
- It takes weeks for an infant to begin producing tears, and it may be several weeks before their nasolacrimal canal, which contains the duct, opens up.
- Most babies' tear ducts open up within the first year of life.
- Parents of babies whose ducts are not fully opened by then (a condition known as dacryostenosis, which affects approximately 30 percent of infants) are encouraged to massage the skin overlying the tear ducts to help speed up the process.
- If this does not work, an ophthalmologist can perform a probing procedure to open the ducts and stop the watery eyes.
- It is important to remember that excessive tearing is not an emergency: yes it can be annoying, but it can also be treated easily

What are the causes of watery eyes?

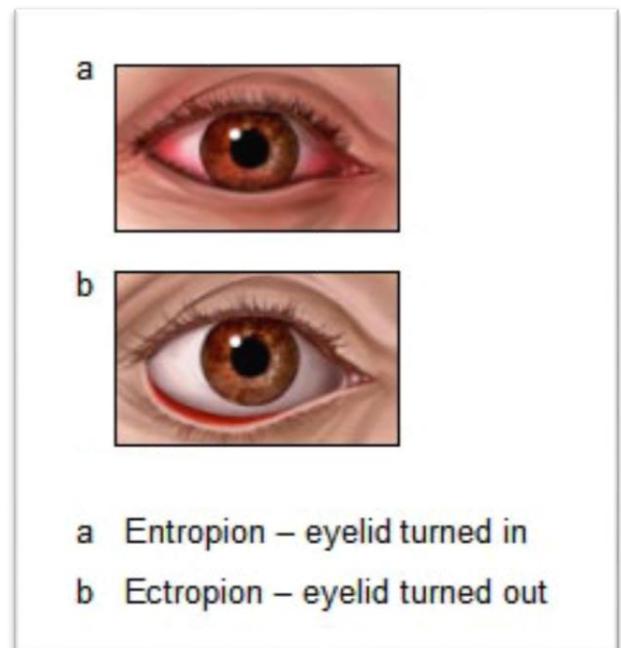
- Some of the possible conditions causing water eyes, or epiphora, are:
 - Blepharitis which inflames the eyelids and creates poor quality tears
 - Dry eyes which make the eyes sore causing reflex watering
 - An allergy
 - Something irritating your eye such as eyelash growth
 - Thyroid eye disease

Remedies for watery eyes

Ectropion

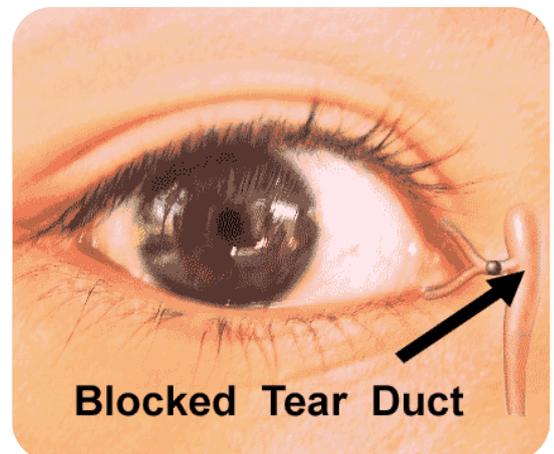
- As you age, the muscles and tendons in your eyelids tend to relax.

- If they relax too much the inner part of your eyelid may not lie flat against the surface of your eye and ectropion results.
- The reverse effect of ectropion is entropion where the eyelid turns in.
- If you suffer from ectropion tears are prevented from entering the puncta and they end up pooling in the corner of your eye.
- They may become stagnant thus irritating the eye.
- Treatment of ectropion may include the application of artificial tears, lubricating eye ointments or surgery to tighten the tendons and muscles of your eyelid.
- To remedy ectropion your eye specialist can do a lid-tightening procedure under local anaesthetic at Southern Eye.



Blocked tear duct

- A common age-related cause of watery eye is a blocked tear duct.
- The blockage can occur anywhere between the puncta to the nasolacrimal canal.
- Your eye specialist will pass a narrow probe into the punctum and inject salty water, which, if it reaches the nose, means there is not a blockage.
- If the puncta are partially blocked they can sometimes be dilated with a small instrument which will provide temporary relief from over-tearing.
- If the blockage is more severe it can be treated with a simple surgical procedure called a punctoplasty, at Southern Eye's rooms.
- However if the blockage is found to be in the nasolacrimal duct it may require a dacryocystorhinostomy operation to get past the blockage.



Dacryocystorhinostomy ("DCR")

- A DCR operation restores the flow of tears into the nose from the lacrimal sac when the nasolacrimal duct stops functioning.
- A DCR operation is usually done as day surgery in a hospital but typically requires a general anaesthetic.
- The blockage is bypassed and a new channel is made from the lacrimal sac straight into the nose.

