

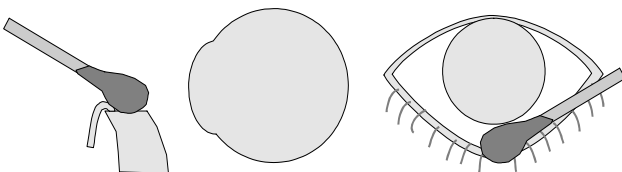
...prevention continued (eyelid cleaning)

Some people develop marginal ulcers quite frequently, perhaps every few months. You **may** be able to stop more ulcers developing, or at least make them less frequent, by cleaning your eyelids regularly. The cleaning helps to reduce the number of bacteria in the glands of the lid.

Eye lid cleaning:

Lid cleaning is only necessary if you have had several ulcers, or if your doctor or nurse advise. There are two main methods.

One method is to boil some water to sterilise it, and allow it to cool a little so it is still hot, but not hot enough to burn. Add half a teaspoon of baby shampoo to a pint of the boiled water. Soak a clean face cloth in the baby shampoo solution and hold it against your eye for 2-3 minutes. The steam from the solution will loosen the scales on the lids. Then gently rub a cotton bud soaked in the same solution (warm not hot) along the edge of the *lower* eyelid, to remove scales and debris on the edge of the lid. Use a mirror, and pull the lid away from the eyeball with the fingers of the other hand. Try cleaning the edge of the upper lid gently without pulling (the upper lid is



If your ulcer does not start to get better after 2 days treatment, and particularly if it gets redder or more sore, you will have to return to the Emergency Eye Department (between 9am and 4pm).

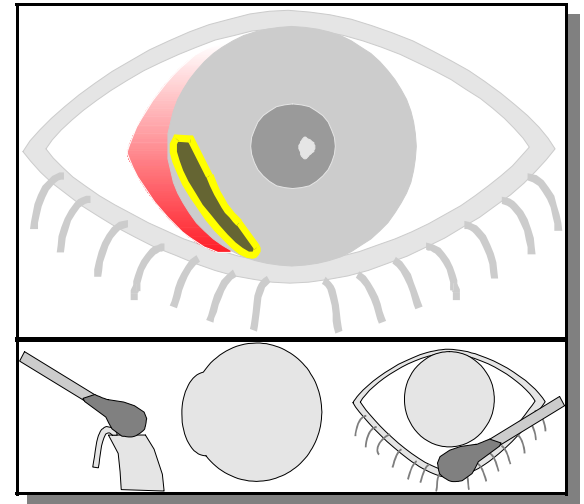
harder to clean and not so important). A second simpler method of bathing is to use water from the hot water tap, and gently wipe the flannel against your closed eyelids. Then clean the lids with a cotton bud as above. (Some doctors think boiled water is safer.)

Using either method bathe and clean 2-3 times a day at first, then less often as the lids become cleaner. It is safe to stop cleaning but you may need to start again if the ulcers return; alternatively continue cleaning just at night. Some people find baby shampoo does not help: try with and without (plain water) to see which cleans best.

If you develop marginal ulcers every month for several months, antibiotic treatment may be helpful. An antibiotic cream may help, such as Fucithalmic twice daily for one or more months, depending on how frequent your ulcers are. If this does not work, and your ulcers are very troublesome, tablets may help: Oxytetracycline 250mg twice daily for 3 months (providing you are not pregnant and are otherwise well ... ask your doctor first). Doxycycline or erythromycin are alternatives.

Generally you should have seen an ophthalmologist at least a couple of times with ulcers before considering tablets.

Marginal Ulcers



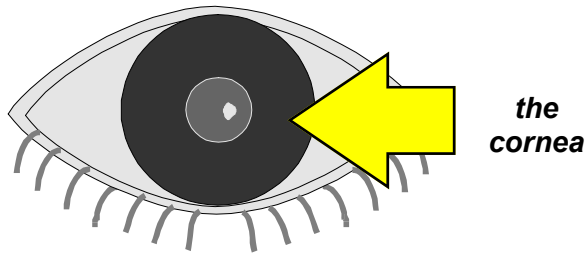
This leaflet explains

- **what marginal ulcers are**
- **how to treat them**
- **how they may be prevented if they occur frequently**

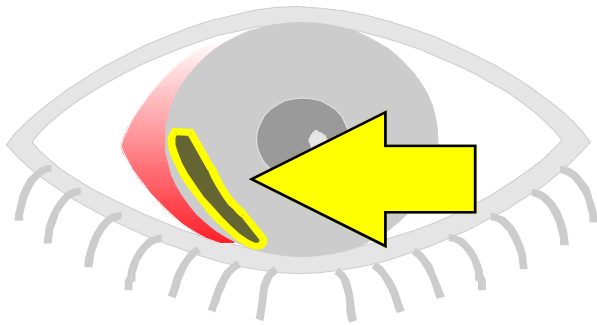
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What is a marginal ulcer?

A marginal ulcer is a small ulcer on the front part of your eye, the cornea. The cornea is the clear 'window' of the eye'.

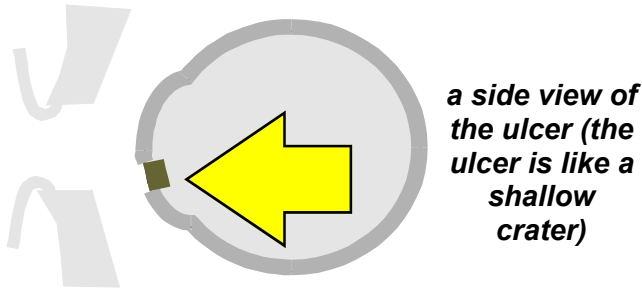


An 'ulcer' is a shallow crater, a bit like a crater on the surface of the moon. A 'marginal ulcer' is a shallow ulcer on the surface of the cornea.



a marginal ulcer: the eye is red just near the ulcer (the ulcer appears green when the doctor or nurse places a special fluorescent dye drop in your eye)

A doctor or nurse can see the ulcer by using a slit lamp, a type of microscope, used in the eye clinic.



What causes marginal ulcers?

They form as part of your body's reaction to bacteria (germs). Some bacteria are trapped in the eyelids, and some are naturally present on the surface of everyone's eyes. The bacteria may invade the surface of the cornea, and your body's immune system reacts to the bacteria to make the ulcer. When the body 'over-reacts' an ulcer forms.

What do you feel?

At first your eye starts to feel a little sore, as though something may be in it, and a little bit achy. About 1-2 days later it may start to water and be painful and red. Bright lights become painful, and your eye may become sticky and difficult to open in the morning.

What is the treatment?

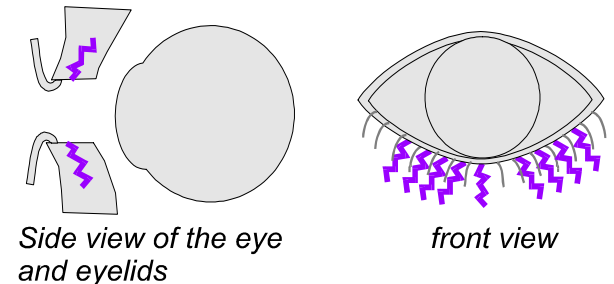
There are two parts to the treatment: treating the ulcer itself, and then trying to prevent more ulcers.

The Ulcer itself

You are usually given steroid drops to put in your eye. These stop the eye's immune system over-reacting and so allows the ulcer to heal. The steroid drops, such as Predsol or Predsol-N, generally have no side effects for the short time they are needed (1-3 weeks). The ulcer usually gets a little better in a day, and completely better in a week. Sometimes an antibiotic drop is needed such as the 'N' part of Predsol-N or chloramphenicol to stop a more serious infection of the cornea.

Prevention of more ulcers

Doctors believe that the bacteria in the glands of the eyelids help to cause these ulcers.



The glands in the eyelids: glands in purple continued.....