

What Can I Do About Dry Eyes in the Winter?

Dry eyes are actually very common. [Millions of Americans](#) suffer from this annoying and sometimes painful condition. So, it's not surprising that this topic came up in our latest episode of Ask an Eye Doc. VSP network eye doctor, Joseph Allen hails from Minnesota. With winter looming, we knew he'd be just the right doctor to ask about the dropping temperature's impact on our eyes.



“I live up in Minnesota where it's freezing cold most of the year, and I personally have dry eyes, so I can relate to this question,” he tells us. “Some people experience watery eyes in the wintertime, and they think that they have a problem with tearing. A lot of times, however, it's just that the eyes are dry, and the body's recognizing that and trying to fix it itself by producing more tears.”

There are several solutions to dry eyes in the winter that require simple adjustments to everyday activities.

“One way you can prevent dryness is just by wearing some protective eyewear. That is going to protect your eyes from the harsh elements of the winter air, including wind and snow,” says Dr. Allen. “Also, keep in mind any direct airflow from heaters or furnaces that you might be exposed to. When in the car, make sure that the heater is pointing down toward the floor instead of directly in your face.”

Dr. Allen also recommends some over-the-counter solutions that can make a big difference.

“Having a humidifier, either at home in living rooms or your bedroom, or even at the office can help as well,” he says. “Also consider supplementing with artificial tears, or if you're having a real hard time, talk with your local eye doctor for any other medications, or other treatments for dry eyes.”

Remember, an accurate diagnosis is important because symptoms of dry eye can be caused by other things such as allergies. [Schedule an eye exam](#) with a VSP network doctor if you're struggling with dry eyes.

Have an eye-related question? Use the hashtag #AskAnEyeDoc on social media!

This article was reviewed by [Joseph J. Allen, OD, FAAO](#). Dr. Allen practices at the Buffalo Eye Clinic in Buffalo, Minnesota.

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