

IPL Laser Therapy

What is IPL laser therapy?

IPL laser therapy is a safe, non-invasive treatment for dry eye disease caused by meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) that works by using light energy to destroy abnormal blood vessels on the eyelids and liquefy blockages in the oil glands.

The light creates heat that coagulates blood vessels, reducing the flow of inflammatory cells to the glands, and also provides heat to the glands themselves, thinning the oil they produce so it can flow better. A typical treatment course involves multiple sessions, often followed by a gland expression procedure to remove the liquefied oil and clear the glands.

How IPL works for MGD:

Inflammation reduction: The IPL energy is absorbed by haemoglobin, the protein in blood, creating heat. This heat targets and destroys small, abnormal blood vessels (telangiectasias) on the eyelid margins, which are a major source of inflammation for the meibomian glands.

Gland stimulation: The heat from the IPL also directly stimulates the meibomian glands, helping to liquefy the thick, blocked oil within them.

Improved oil flow: With the oil thinned, it can more easily flow out of the glands and spread across the eye's surface, forming a stable tear film and preventing tears from evaporating too quickly.

What to Expect:

Preparation: Your doctor will perform a dry eye evaluation to ensure MGD is the cause of your symptoms.

Procedure: Eye shields are placed to protect your eyes, a cooling gel is applied, and pulses of light are delivered to the skin around the eyelids. You may feel a slight snapping sensation.

Post-treatment: After the light treatment, the doctor will manually express the meibomian glands to help clear the liquefied oil.

Course of treatment: A typical series involves at least four treatments spaced 2-4 weeks apart. Maintenance treatments may be required annually or as needed.

Safety and Side Effects:

IPL laser therapy is generally considered very safe when performed by a trained specialist. Most patients experience only mild, temporary side effects such as slight redness, swelling or warmth around the treated area, which usually resolves within a few hours to a day. Serious complications are rare, but your doctor will discuss any risks and ensure that IPL is suitable for your specific condition before starting treatment.

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Benefits of IPL

Addresses the root cause: Treats the underlying inflammation and blockages, not just symptoms.

Non-invasive: A comfortable procedure with few complications.

Long-lasting relief: Results can be maintained, leading to less redness, swelling, and discomfort.

Who Can Benefit:

IPL is particularly effective for patients with moderate to severe meibomian gland dysfunction or chronic dry eye symptoms that have not responded well to traditional treatments such as artificial tears or warm compresses. People with certain skin types or eye conditions may require special assessment before treatment. Your doctor will help determine whether IPL is an appropriate option for you and tailor the therapy to your individual needs.

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