

DEFINITION

1. **Blepharitis** is a chronic inflammation of the margins of the eyelids which may appear as a simple reddening or as a true inflammation. It may occur in two forms:
 - 1.1. **squamous or seborrhoeic blepharitis**, in which small white scales accumulate on the margin of the eyelid. The eyelashes fall out readily but are replaced without distortion
 - 1.2. **ulcerative blepharitis**, in which yellow crusts glue the lashes together. On removing the crusts, small bleeding ulcers are seen around the bases of the lashes. This distinguishes the condition from that associated with conjunctival discharge, in which removal of the crusts reveals normal lid margins.

CLINICAL FEATURES

2. The symptoms are redness of the edges of the lids, itching, soreness, lacrimation and photophobia.

AETIOLOGY

3. Squamous or seborrhoeic blepharitis is associated frequently with dandruff of the scalp.
4. Ulcerative blepharitis may result from -
 - 4.1. chronic conjunctivitis due to staphylococci carried to the lid margins by infected fingers;
 - 4.2. parasites such as Demodex folliculorum, the crab louse and, rarely, the head louse.

CONCLUSION

5. **Blepharitis** is a generalised inflammation of the margins of the eyelids, which may be associated with dandruff or may result from infection.

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