

THYROID EYE DISEASE (TED)

Thyroid eye disease is a condition in which the eyelid, eye muscles, tear glands, and fatty tissues behind the eye become inflamed. This condition can cause not only double vision, discomfort, redness and swollen eyes, but also cause the eyes to be pushed forward, which is also known as “staring” or “bulging” eyes. TED is also known as Graves Orbitopathy or Ophthalmopathy which is an autoimmune condition. It often occurs when a person’s immune system attacks the tissues surrounding the eye causing inflammation in the tissues behind and around the eye.



The most common symptoms are :

- Changing in the appearance of the eye (staring or bulging eyes)
- Watery eyes
- Feeling of grittiness and dryness in the eyes
- Intolerance and sensitivity of bright lights
- Swelling in the upper and lower eyelids
- New bags occurring in the under eyelids
- Redness in the eye and eyelids
- Blurred and/or double vision
- Painful eyes and eyelids, especially looking side to side and up and down
- Difficulty moving the eye around

(Left photo : with TED bulging eye / Right photo : without TED normal eye)

Some of the prevention options for TED include first, avoiding fluctuations in your thyroid levels, particularly hypothyroidism. Second, quit smoking (if you are a smoker) because smokers tend to respond less well to treatments rather than non-smokers. Third, avoid radioiodine treatments if you have active TED, which can worsen the disease especially in smokers. Lastly, taking selenium supplements, which in recent evidence suggests that patients with mild TED may benefit from. Some of the treatment options for mild cases is lubrication of the eye with artificial tears, gel eye drops, and eye ointments. Symptoms may worsen for the first six to 12 months or so, and after your eyes should be stable. Lots of inflammation may need treatment with steroids and/or combined with radiotherapy for more effective control of the symptoms. Some people may be left with permanent double vision or changes in the appearance of the eyelids. If this is the case there are a few surgeries, which are decompression surgery to create more space behind the eye when there is pressure build up on the nerves, eye muscle surgery to treat double vision only if it cannot be controlled with prism glasses, and eyelid surgery and special prism attachment to glasses or temporarily covering one eye to alleviate double vision. TED can affect a person's quality of life, psychological, and social well-being depending on their thyroid levels, such as feeling anxious and/or irritable and suffering from mood swings. The change in the appearance of our eyes may also have you feel anger, low self esteem or confidence and be socially isolated.