

Sand in my eyes



**YOUR
HEALTH**

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Q My eyes feel dry, as though there is sand in them.

This may be due to dry eye syndrome, when the tear glands do not produce enough tears to keep the eyes adequately lubricated.

Dry eyes can occur because of increasing age, certain medications or prolonged computer use without blinking frequently enough.

You could try placing a warm, moist towel over your closed eyes for 5-10 minutes twice a day. Make a conscious effort to blink more often when using a computer or mobile phone. Follow the 20-20-20 rule by looking away from the screen every 20 minutes at an object 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. Drink plenty of water to stay well hydrated and wear sunglasses when outdoors to protect your eyes from the sun and wind. Lubricating eye drops, commonly called artificial tears, are available over the counter at pharmacies and can be used two or three times a day, or as directed.

If your symptoms persist, become painful or affect your vision, consult an ophthalmologist for a detailed eye examination.

Dirty mobiles

Q I feel that my mobile phone is contaminated with bacteria and viruses. Since my young children often handle it, I worry that it may transmit infections to them.

Mobile phones are handled with dirty hands, carried into bathrooms and left lying on various surfaces. They can certainly pick up germs, which may then be transferred to the next susceptible person who uses the device. Phones cannot be washed with water because moisture can enter the internal components and damage them.

Instead, they should be gently wiped with a soft, lint-free microfibre cloth. If you need to clean the camera lens, use a special lens-cleaning cloth. Avoid using toilet paper, paper towels or other abrasive materials, as they

may scratch the screen or lens. Do not spray cleaning liquids directly onto the phone and avoid using hand sanitiser. If disinfection is required, lightly dampen the microfibre cloth with 70 per cent isopropyl alcohol and gently wipe the external surfaces, taking care not to allow any liquid to enter the charging port, speakers or other openings.

Fatty liver

Q I have a continuous bloated feeling in my abdomen. An ultrasound scan showed that I have a "fatty liver". How is this possible? I am a 54-year-old woman and I do not drink alcohol.

Fatty liver disease occurs when excess fat accumulates in the liver, even in people who do not drink alcohol. This condition is now called metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), formerly known as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). It is particularly common after the age of 50, when oestrogen levels decline. The risk is higher in

people who are overweight or obese, have elevated cholesterol or triglyceride levels, diabetes, high blood pressure or lead a sedentary lifestyle.

The good news is that the condition can often be halted and even reversed in its early stages. Achieving and

maintaining an ideal body weight, exercising regularly, following a healthy diet and controlling blood sugar and lipid levels can prevent progression to liver inflammation, scarring (cirrhosis) and liver failure. Regular follow-up with your doctor is important to monitor your liver health.

Water intake

Q When should I ideally drink water and how much is a healthy amount to drink?

The best times to drink water are soon after you wake up in the morning, before, during and after exercise, and whenever you are sweating excessively because of hot weather or physical activity. You should also drink water whenever you feel thirsty and increase your intake during illness, especially if you have a fever, vomiting or diarrhoea. You should drink enough so that your urine is always lemon yellow in colour.



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