

METHOD FOR PREVENTING NASOLACRIMAL DUCT OBSTRUCTION

Radioactive iodine is a commonly used treatment in patients with thyroid cancer and other thyroid disorders such as Graves Disease and hyperthyroidism. Many of these patients may develop scarring of their tear drain system as a side effect of this therapy.

With progressive scarring, the tear drain narrows which may eventually become obstructed, thereby preventing the normal outflow of tears. This leads to symptoms of frequent tearing, eye irritation and redness. Infections of the tear drain may occur as a result of this type of blockage. Once there is a blockage, a surgery is usually necessary in order to relieve the obstruction. The surgery that's commonly used to treat blocked tear ducts is called dacryocystorhinostomy or DCR.

Dr. Morgenstern has patented a safe, non-invasive, and effective methodology aimed at preventing the scarring which occurs in the tear drain system as a result of radioactive iodine therapy. This method involves the use of topical eye medications (drops or ointment) which specifically target and inhibit the scarring process. A patient is started on the medication three to five days prior to initiation of radiation therapy. The eye medication is used as long as the patient is receiving the radioactive iodine therapy and is continued for an additional three to five days following cessation of treatment.

By preventing the scarring of the tear drain which typically occurs as a result of radiation, patients can avoid the symptoms related to this (tearing, irritation). They are less likely to acquire a blockage of the system, thereby eliminating the necessity of a more invasive and costly corrective surgery.