

Australian Society of Ophthalmologists Inc. ABN 29 454 001 424

## Make up your eyes...just don't make your eyes sick! **Ophthalmologists issue safety tips to avoid eye makeup related infections**

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Following a few simple rules will ensure you avoid eye makeup related infections, The Australian Society of Ophthalmologists said today.

The advice comes after Sydney woman Theresa Lynch's story of failed mascara removal and the surgery she needed to remove the deep eyelid calcification it caused made headlines around the world.

ASO President Dr Peter Sumich says unfortunately eye infections caused by poor makeup hygiene are not uncommon.

"Eyes are the most delicate organs in the body and extremely sensitive," Dr Sumich explains.

"Most patients do not realise that make-up containers and application brushes can be a breeding ground for bacteria and we as eye specialists often see the unintended consequences. These can easily be avoided," he says.

Common cosmetically induced eye infections include: Allergic conjunctivitis (Inflammation of cornea), Iritis/Eye inflammation (Inflammation of iris), Eye dermatitis (Inflammation of skin Eye) and Blepharitis (Inflammation of Eyelids).

The ASO advised eye makeup users to live by 5 simple rules:

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**1. Clean & careful application.** Before applying eye makeup make sure your eyelids are very clean. Always apply makeup outside the lash line, away from the eye, to avoid blocking the oil glands of the upper or lower eyelid. These glands secrete oil that protects the eye's surface.

**2. Wash off the day.** Remove all eye makeup at night before sleeping, especially mascara that can stick to the lashes. Brush a clean cotton swab along the base of the eyelashes to remove all makeup remnants. If you use eye makeup remover, avoid getting it in your eyes and thoroughly rinse remover off your eyelids.

**3. Be sensitive.** If you tend to suffer from dry eyes avoid metallic/glitter, powder or other makeup that flakes. Flakes can make their way into the eye's tear film and increase irritation.

**4. The 3 month rule.** Throw away eye makeup after three months. Infection-causing bacteria grow easily in creamy or liquid eye makeup. If you develop an eye infection, immediately toss all of your eye makeup. Tip: Buy travel-size tubes and write the date opened on the container. Never share: sharing mascara or any makeup is a prime way to transmit scary germs.

**5. Avoid falsies.** Be wary of false lashes, they can be a haven for bacterial infection. Women are told not to rub them because they fall off, but unfortunately this can lead to them becoming matted with oil and a home for staphylococcal bacteria.

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