

M. A. Khan, M.D.

Board Certified Dermatologist
4761 Higbee Avenue N.W.
Canton, Ohio 44718-2551
Tel: 330-492-1117
Fax: 330-244-9451

www.makhanmd.com

Dark Circles under the Eyes

Just the facts Dark circles are caused by one of three primary reasons.
Here's the quick and dirty on which solution works best for each type.

- **Bone structure.** If you have deep-set eyes, shadowing contributes to the dark color under the eyes. Your best bet: camouflage. Look for concealers with yellow undertones, which counteract the bluish cast to under-eye circles.

- **Pigmentation.** Genetic hyper-pigmentation is the most treatable form of dark circles. Your best bet: Try a lightening cream or talk to a dermatologist about chemical peels or laser resurfacing.

- **Vasculature** inflammation. Late nights, allergies and nutritional deficiencies can enlarge the blood vessels beneath the thin under-eye skin. Your best bet: Take care of yourself! Sounds cliché but drink that water, get your beauty sleep, eat a healthy diet and avoid cigarette smoke (easy enough, right?).

Most dark circles are caused by the veins beneath the thin skin under the eye. As we age and receive more sun damage to our facial skin, the thin skin under the eye can become thinner and wrinkled, which allows the veins in the fat pad under the eye to become more prominent. These veins also become more congested in people with allergies, and people with a history of eczema, hay fever or asthma often develop dark circles referred to as "allergic shiners." Of course, dark circles often become more apparent with a lack of sleep as well. In some people with dark skin and certain conditions, the dark circles under the eye may actually be due to superficial pigmentation of the skin, and not the veins under the skin.

Common sense measures such as getting plenty of sleep and treating allergies can often help. Short-term tricks used by some models, such as applying cool cucumber slices or cool tea bags to the under eye area, reduce swelling in the short term. For those in whom the dark circles are due to true skin pigmentation, lightening agents -- used with care in this sensitive area -- can help. However, be sure to check with your dermatologist first, to determine whether your circles are due to superficial pigment or veins beneath the thin lower eyelid skin.

The definitive treatment for those with sagging under eye skin and dark circles is blepharoplasty. This surgery removes the excess skin and fat pads under the eyes. It is one of the most common aesthetic procedures performed by plastic surgeons. Blepharoplasty is often combined with laser resurfacing, depending on the amount of wrinkling around the eyes. This surgery does not actually remove dark circles, but once the bags are gone there will be less shadowing and the circles will be less noticeable. Your overall appearance will be more youthful and rested. The recovery time is one to two weeks.

M. A. Khan, M.D.

Board Certified Dermatologist
4761 Higbee Avenue N.W.
Canton, Ohio 44718-2551
Tel: 330-492-1117
Fax: 330-244-9451

www.makhanmd.com

**Circles and Bags
Science Q&A**

. *Why do some people have dark circles or bags around their eyes?*

There are several things that can cause this, dermatologists say, but the three most likely ones are genetics (having a family with the kind of skin that makes dark circles more likely), fluid retention (which causes puffiness that may cast shadows) and aging, which thins and relaxes the skin around the eyes.

The eyelids are already the thinnest, softest areas of skin in the body. Normal skin is around 2 millimeters thick, but eyelid skin is only 0.5 millimeters thick.

Bags under the eyes, formed of fatty tissue and fluid, form early in some families. Shadows from overhead lighting may cause the appearance of circles, or thin skin on the lower eyelid may let the dark-red or purple inside of the lid show through.

If fluid is retained in the body, the bags can get even bigger. Some conditions that cause fluid retention include heart, thyroid, kidney and liver problems, high blood pressure and premenstrual bloating. Some medications can also cause fluid problems.

Then, as the body ages, the skin around the eyes may thin and sag, causing bagginess.

Fatigue may make muscles relax or lose their tone, with the same results, but fatigue is probably not as big a cause as the other three.

To avoid dark circles, cut salt intake, to fight fluid retention, and try sleeping with extra pillows, to let gravity fight the pooling of liquid.

Sometimes the solution to circles and bags may be as simple as stopping the use of an irritating cosmetic, like mascara, which may contain a dye to which some people are allergic.

In some people, puffiness results from a protrusion of excess fat around the eyes. There are two fat pads on the upper lid and three on the lower, giving many people that tired, haggard look. The fat pads also run in families and are not related to excess weight. The pads can be removed with a kind of plastic surgery called blepharoplasty.

M. A. Khan, M.D.
Board Certified Dermatologist
4761 Higbee Avenue N.W.
Canton, Ohio 44718-2551
Tel: 330-492-1117
Fax: 330-244-9451

www.makhanmd.com

Top 8 Causes of Dark Circles Under the Eyes
<http://about.com/>
Most People Inherit the Tendency for Dark Circles

Black or dark circles under or around the eyes can be caused by many different factors. The following are the most common causes of those unattractive dark circles.

HEREDITY

Like varicose veins, dark circles under the eyes are usually an inherited trait. If you have dark circles, there is a good chance that others in your family also have them. The skin under the eye is very thin. When blood passes through the large veins close to the surface of the skin it can produce a bluish tint. The more transparent your skin, also an inherited trait, the darker the circles appear.

EXPOSURE TO THE SUN

Even in darker skinned people, exposure to sunlight, especially during the summer months, can cause a higher-than-normal level of skin pigmentation (melanin) under the eyes. People get sun tans because exposure to the sun increases the natural pigmentation of the skin and draws that pigmentation to the surface. The same principle applies to the skin under the eyes.

ALLERGIES, ASTHMA and ECZEMA

Any condition that you have that causes your eyes to itch can contribute to darker circles under the eyes because rubbing or scratching the skin can darken the skin. Hay fever sufferers particularly will notice under-eye "smudges" during the height of the allergy season. Some food allergies can also cause the area under the eyes to appear darker.

MEDICATIONS

Any medications that you are taking that causes blood vessels to dilate, can cause circles under the eyes to darken. Because the skin under the eyes is very delicate, any increase blood flow shows through the skin.

NUTRITION

The lack of nutrients in the diet, or the lack of a balance diet, can contribute to the discoloration of the area under the eyes.

FATIGUE, LACK OF SLEEP

A lack of sleep or excessive tiredness can cause paleness of the skin, which again allows the blood underneath the skin to become more visible and appear more blue or darker.

PREGNANCY and MENSTRUATION

The skin can also become more pale during pregnancy and menstruation, which again allows the underlying veins under the eyes to become more visible.

AGE

If you have a propensity to have dark circles under you eyes, as you grow older, they are likely to become more noticeable and permanent. Excess folds of skin under the eyes will also make dark circles more pronounced.



Dark Circles

<http://www.dermadoctor.com>

Nothing is more noticeable than dark circles. They instantly mar your beauty *and* alter your expression. Dark circles age the face, create a tired, haggard appearance and cast a deceptively disinterested expression. Don't tolerate dark circles one minute more. Neutralize them and reclaim the wide-eyed dazzling look you deserve.

THE BLAME GAME

Blame it on heredity. Blame it on the aging process. Blame allergies, sun damage, or poor lighting. A compilation of the following factors may conspire to form dark circles.

- Dark Shadows

No, it's not about the classic 60's vampire show. Contrary to popular belief, most dark circles have nothing to do with actual skin color changes. Rather, dark shadows form when changes in facial anatomy occur. A normal part of the aging process, the infraorbital fat pad (the fatty layer located just above the cheek bone and below the eye) thins producing a sunken appearance. Light reflects off these hollows creating the illusion of shadowy circles. So while boomers struggle with fat accumulating around hips, tummy and jaw line, the opposite problem is happening beneath the eyes.

This is one time that facial fat is a highly sought after commodity!

- Bag Lady

Bags emerge as a result of gravity, loss of dermal integrity, hormonal skin changes, allergies, capillary fragility and inflammation from chronic sun damage. Under eye puffiness augments the tired appearance and exaggerate dark circles.

Pooling of excess tissue fluids contributes to bag formation. This edema (fluid buildup) forms as a result of the inflammatory process, leaky capillaries and poor lymphatic drainage.

- Roses Are Red, Veins Though Are Blue...

The proliferation of veins in the area is an important factor in the development of dark circles. Factors may include heredity, the natural aging process and cumulative sun damage. While sheer numbers of veins is on the rise, the thinning of the fat pad brings them closer to the surface increasing their visibility.

Larger veins are visible, others – including microscopic capillaries – are not. Both contribute to the characteristic skin tone changes associated with dark circles.

- True Hue

Occasionally chronic rubbing brought on by allergy sufferers reacting to itchy, watery eyes can lead to true skin color changes. Further rubbing leads to a vicious cycle of ever increasing darkening skin. This is the rare instance when a bleaching agent (in addition to control of the underlying condition) is necessary to solve the problem.

Treatment is two-fold. Stop the itching and watery eyes so that the impetus to rub is eliminated. Control allergies/hay fever with oral antihistamines such as [Benadryl](#) or [Claritin](#). Ask your physician if Rx antihistamines will help in stubborn situations. Brief intermittent use of low potency prescription topical steroids, Protopic or Elidel (each should be kept out of the eyes) can help provide relief.

Bleaching this delicate area is a bit tricky but not impossible. [Peter Thomas Roth AHA/Kojic Acid Under Eye Brightener](#) may be applied during the daytime followed by a broad spectrum sunscreen such as [DERMAdoctor Body Guard Exquisitely Light SPF 30 For Face & Body](#). Skin brightening is accomplished and the sunscreen provides potent antioxidants to reduce free radical damage, a source of photodamage-induced dark circles.

Defeating The Darkness

Eliminating dark circles begins with camouflage. Therapy options to improve dark circles don't work overnight. Hiding them provides immediate gratification and restores radiance to the eye area. Yellow counter acts blue so this is the color of concealer to look for. A simple effective cover-up is [T. LeClerc Liquid Concealer - Banane](#). It may be applied alone or beneath foundation depending upon one's skin tone.

Reducing fluid build-up and bagginess beneath the eyes makes the face look fresher, more rested and youthful. Antioxidant treatments help shrink bags. Those that help stimulate dermal fibroblast activity go further by helping firm and tone the region. Antioxidants like Vitamin C (look to [Cellex-C Eye Contour Cream](#), SkinCeuticals Eye Gel or [MD Skincare Continuous Eye Hydration](#)), GHK Copper Peptides (think [Neova Eye Therapy](#)) or the newest generation of amino acid peptides, Peptide-D58 in [DERMAdoctor Wrinkle Revenge Rescue & Protect Eye Balm](#) are all excellent choices for helping to stimulate dermal fibroblasts.

Treatment of venous concerns has traditionally been the domain of topical Vitamin K products. A study in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology* demonstrated that use of a topical vitamin A derivative (such as a retinol or rx version) in a combined routine with vitamin K was even more beneficial. Consider incorporating Vitamin K containing products such as [Peter Thomas Roth Power K Eye Rescue](#), [K-Derm Gel](#) or [MD Skincare Lift & Lighten Eye Cream](#) in a routine with Vitamin A containing treatments such as [Afirm 2X](#). The retinol is always used solo every other night, filling in off once or twice a day with the Vitamin K treatment. [MD Formulations Vit-A-Plus Anti-Aging Eye Complex](#) is also an off night option. It contains glycolic acid and Vitamin A, helping refine lines, too.

I've always been struck by the fact that the approach to handling dark circles seems so scattered. Why conceal without treating or why treat for 6 months without concealing? In response to this dilemma and wanting to simplify the process, [DERMAdoctor Eye Spy Daily Eye Treatment and Shadow Neutralizer](#) was created. A universal yellow concealer helps hide the dark circles while containing everything you could want to eliminate them.

[DERMAdoctor Eye Spy Daily Eye Treatment and Shadow Neutralizer](#) contains caffeine to shrink the bags and reduce inflammation; dipeptide-2 to improve improve lymphatic circulation; white tea – a potent antioxidant; palmitoyl tetrapeptide diminishes visible puffiness, improves skin firmness and elasticity; retinol to help reduce fine lines and puffiness. And finally, in place of Vitamin K which can be very irritating to this delicate area, hesperidin methyl chalcone for decreasing capillary permeability and preventing fluid buildup within the skin.

The Quick Kitchen Fixes

If unprepared for under eye bagginess and the dark circles that inevitably follow, try a quick fix straight out of the kitchen. Moist cool tea bags (the caffeinated ones) rapidly reduce swelling. The tannins in the tea help reduce the swelling by reducing inflammation. And caffeine draws water from the skin helping deflate puffiness.

Another solution is in the vegetable crisper...cool cucumbers. Enzymes contained in cucumber slices reduce tissue inflammation, shrinking bags and erasing unbecoming shadows. Keep these on hand for those little life emergencies like when your kids have kept you up all night or you need to look your best for that special event. They´re temporary, but do work!

Filler Her Up

Sometimes treatments just aren't enough. Deep hollows may ultimately sometimes need to be filled in order to eliminate the problem. Fat transplantation has become a popular method of dealing with recalcitrant dark circles, mainly when puffiness is not an issue. Fat is removed from the hip, thigh or buttock through a syringe or liposuction cannula from locally anesthetized skin, rinsed and then injected under the skin into the hollow.

Added fat instantly plumps up skin and neutralizes shadows. It also helps reduce visibility of veins that peek out from beneath the surface. Fat transplantation is typically performed by plastic surgeons, and sometimes by dermatologists. It isn't a permanent solution and you may need to undergo more than one treatment in order to see results but it may be worthwhile.

In rare instances, it is the presence of the veins themselves that are the real culprit. For these large noticeable blood vessels, consult a plastic surgeon specializing in facial plastic surgery or an ophthalmologist specializing in plastic surgery procedures of the eye. In these cases fat transplantation and vein stripping may need to be performed. This is not something to leave to just anyone. See an expert.

Eradicating dark circles is not easy, but through perseverance and a little make-up magic you should be able to improve their appearance as well as the overall general health of your skin's appearance.

Thank you for taking the time for reading my newsletter. I hope you have found it informative.


How to Conceal Dark Under Eye Circles

Dark under eye circles can be caused by fatigue, poor circulation, extra-thin skin under the eyes, hyper-pigmentation, illness or allergies. Treating the cause will help keep dark circles from coming back. In the meantime, consider the following cover-up tactics:


Steps:

1. To hide dark under eye circles, select a cosmetic under-eye concealer that's one shade lighter than the foundation you're using.
2. Understand that a pale yellowish concealer helps hide blue or grayish circles, while a light blue or mauvish concealer masks brownish under-the-eye bags.
3. Begin with a freshly washed and exfoliated face. Dab concealer under your eyes gently, using a soft circular motion.
4. Apply foundation up to the concealer and blend the two shades together gently, using a circular motion to cover dark under eye circles.
5. Finish with a dusting of untinted face powder for a polished, seamless look.

6. Tips:

7.
 - Avoid concealers containing oils, because the oil will settle into the fine lines under your eyes and draw attention to the circles.
8.
 - When using a cosmetic under eye concealer, wearing foundation is a must to avoid the "white mask" look.
9.  **Warnings:**
 - Never use an over-the-counter facial and body cream bleach under the eyes to eliminate dark circles. Use only prescription creams administered under a doctor's supervision.
10.
 - Always apply concealer gently--rubbing can cause swelling, redness or bruising of the under eye area.

Overall Tips:

11.
 - Do make efforts to discover the cause of your dark under eye circles. Are you getting enough sleep? Are you healthy? Consider allergies; they can cause "allergic shiners" when untreated.
12.
 - Talk to a dermatologist about prescription bleach creams for chronic dark circles.
13.
 - Ask your doctor about vitamin-A derivative creams and in-office chemical peels that might help lessen the darkness of your circles.
14.
 - Consider buying a pair of cosmetic-only eyeglasses if concealer doesn't work for you. Pick out rims that rest right over the dark circles.
15.  **Overall Warnings:**
 - This info is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice treatment.

• **Conceal dark circles under your eye** by eHow Friend

To conceal dark circles underneath your eye, first you should buy a concealer (yellow or green). Dab it on, then get a concealer lighter than your foundation color and dab that on using a circular motion. This way you won't have dark circles!