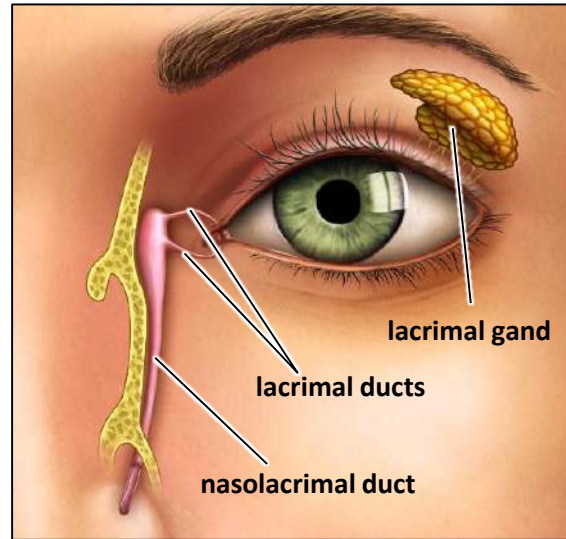


TEARS TEARS EVERYWHERE

(7) Women cry more often than men. This is because many cultures are more accepting of women expressing certain emotions than men, but there are also biochemical and anatomical reasons for the difference in visible tear production. At the inner corner of your eye, closest to your nose, are the lacrimal ducts. These are tear drainage ducts that connect to the nasolacrimal duct in the nasal passages. In women, the lacrimal ducts are significantly smaller than in men. This means that the same amount of tears that would form drops on a woman's cheek can be more easily blinked away by a man because he can drain the tears away faster. His eyes might glisten, but no tears will be seen rolling down his cheek.



Article Questions

- 1) Lacrimal glands (4) produce tears and lacrimal ducts (7) drain away tears. The three major types of tears are the basal tear, the reflex tear and the psychic tear. (2)
- 2) What is one function of basal tears and how much of this type of tear do we make daily?
Any one of the following: 1) lubrication and delivery of nutrients and removal of waste, 2) coating the cornea to produce a smoother surface that generates a clear image on the retina and 3) containing antibodies and lysozymes to defend the eye from infection. We make 5 to 8 ounces of basal tears daily.(3)
- 3) What is the function of reflex tears?
They form to flush away irritants that come in contact with the eye.(4)
- 4) What causes psychic tears to be produced?
Heightened emotional situations (sadness, happiness, fear, frustration) and pain can cause psychic tears to form.(5)
- 5) How is the composition of psychic tears different from basal or reflex tears?
Psychic tears will often contain a higher amount of stress hormones like prolactin, adrenocorticotrophic hormone and enkephalin.(5)
- 6) What explains why your nose sometimes runs when you're crying?
Since the lacrimal ducts drain into the nasolacrimal ducts in the nasal passages, excess tears will drip into the nose. (6)
- 7) How do differences in eye structure contribute to women producing more visible tears than men?
Men have larger lacrimal ducts which help them drain tears away faster as they are being produced. This helps remove tears from the surface of the eye before it can collect into drops that produce visible tears. (7)