

## What causes dark circles under the eyes?

There are many reasons for this condition and many people suffer from them at some time to some degree. They may have a genetic link and are often inherited from parents and certain ethnic groups traditionally have darker coloured skin in this area.

Sun exposure may cause the condition as some skins suffer with uneven pigmentation and if the eye area is already darker than the rest of the face it must be well protected from the sun to prevent the skin darkening even further.

It may also be a characteristic of ageing as pigmentation changes occur with age and the skin becomes thinner showing the blood supply in the veins beneath the surface of the skin. Paler skins are more susceptible to a dark blue or black tint as the blood supply passing through the veins just beneath the surface of the skin is more evident.

Sometimes it is a temporary condition and may be a symptom of tiredness through lack of sleep or when the eyes are tired from overworking. Fluid build up or fat accumulation under the eye may cause the appearance of dark circles and conversely lack of fat or deep set eyes may make the under eye area look darker.

Women may suffer from this problem during menstruation and pregnancy and those with medical conditions such as kidney or thyroid disorders

Diet may also play a part in this problem; insufficient iron and vitamins or too much potassium.

Sinus congestion, smoking and sudden weight loss are other contributing factors.