The Eye

The fluid called tears flows continually from tear ducts at the upper, outer side of each eye. It crosses the eye, lubricating the surface and helping the eyelids move smoothly. At the inner corner of each eye, the fluid drains into the nose. When tiny particles or chemicals get into your eye, tears carry them away—sometimes down your face.

Look at the diagram below. Behind the clear front, or cornea, of the eye is a chamber filled with a clear fluid called aqueous humor. This fluid is produced near the lens of the eye and flows right through the open dark area of the eye, the pupil. The fluid is absorbed in an area just behind the cornea. Aqueous humor carries nutrients to the eye’s lens and cornea. It also carries away waste material.

If aqueous humor builds up too much, the pressure on the lens can cause damage. The pressure can also be transferred to other parts of the eye, where more damage can occur. This condition is called glaucoma. The fluid pressure can be tested by pushing briefly on your cornea with a special instrument or with a puff of air. You will learn more about eyes and vision in Chapter 14.

Fluids and the Eye

Tears clean and lubricate the outer part of the eye, while aqueous humor nourishes some of the clear parts.

Measuring Pressure

A puff of air is used to measure the pressure of the aqueous humor.

Where are the fluids of your eye?

Reading Tip

Humor is an ancient word for a fluid of the body. The root of *aqueous* is *aqua*, meaning “water.”