

what you

NEED TO KNOW

about...

Chalazion

What is a chalazion?

A chalazion is a bump (or pimple) on the eyelid. If we're talking about more than one, we say 'chalazia'. A chalazion happens when an oil gland (meibomian gland) gets blocked.

A chalazion:

- Is often the size of a small pea, but can slowly get bigger or smaller over time
- Is not usually tender
- May cause swelling and redness of the eyelid
- Is not an infection
- Is not cancerous

What's the difference between a sty and a chalazion?

A sty (hordeolum) happens when germs (bacteria) infect an eyelid gland, causing pain, swelling and redness in the eyelid. Sometimes though, chalazia can get infected.

Treatments for chalazion

Most chalazia get better in a few weeks without any treatment at all. Your ophthalmologist (eye doctor) or family doctor will talk with you about the best way to help your child's chalazion.

Warm compresses

Warm compresses may help the chalazion to get better more quickly. They help to open the gland and melt the oil.

To use a warm compress:

- Wet a clean washcloth with warm tap water
- Have your child close his eyes
- Place the washcloth on your child's eyelid for 5-10 minutes, 3 times a day

Eye massage

This can also help to remove the blockage and help the oil gland to drain properly.

To massage your child's eye lid:

- Have your child close her eyes
- Use your finger or a cotton swab to gently rub the chalazion for about a minute
- Rub toward the edge of the eye lid

Eye lid cleaning

This can help to remove the blockage and help the oil gland to drain properly.

To clean your child's eye lid:

- Have your child close her eyes
- Squeeze baby shampoo (or a special eye-lid care fluid) onto a clean washcloth
- Gently rub the eyelid with the washcloth, removing any crusts

Antibiotics

Your doctor may prescribe antibiotic ointment or eye drops if the chalazion gets infected.

To give eye drops:



- Wash your hands
- Gently pull down the lower eye lid
- Place the drops into the lower eye lid
- Have your child keep her eyes closed for 2 minutes. This helps the eye drops to be absorbed.
- Make sure to wait 5-10 seconds before placing other eye drops in your child's eye (if your doctor has prescribed 2 kinds of eye drops)
- Make sure to wait 5-10 seconds before applying ointment to your child's eye (if your doctor has prescribed ointment as well)

If you are having trouble pulling the lower eye lid down:

- Have your child lie down
- Place the drops in the inner corner of the eye
- To help the eye drops to be absorbed, ask your child to blink quickly about 10 times

To give eye ointment:

- Wash your hands
- Gently pull down the lower eye lid and place a thin layer of ointment along the lower eye lid with your finger

If you are having trouble pulling down the lower eyelid:

- Place the ointment on the edges of your child's eyelids. As the ointment melts, it will be absorbed into the eye.

Will my child need surgery?

Surgery is only needed if the chalazion is large or doesn't get better after 5-6 months of treatment. Your child's ophthalmologist will give you all the information you need if your child needs surgery.

Call us or seek medical attention if:

- The chalazion doesn't get better or gets bigger after 1 month of treatment
- Your child's eye lid becomes more red, swollen or painful
- You notice new or more discharge from the eye
- Your child has changes in vision



Special thanks to:

Bo Li, MD Candidate, Class of 2012, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa, for developing the content for this fact sheet.