

## CHALAZION

### What is a chalazion?

A chalazion is a small lump in the eyelid. It is similar to a sty, which is an infection of the edge of the eyelid caused by bacteria. However, a chalazion is away from the edge and is usually not caused by bacteria.

### How does it occur?

A chalazion occurs when one of the small oil-producing glands in the eyelid becomes blocked. Oil secretions may become trapped and cause the lid to swell. The site of the lump may become infected by bacteria. What are the symptoms? Symptoms may include:

- a red lump in your eyelid
- pain near the lump
- swelling of part or all of the eyelid
- a feeling that something is in your eye
- rarely, blurred vision.

### How is it diagnosed?

Your doctor will examine your eye. He or she may send a sample of the tissue or fluid from around the lump to a lab to determine if bacteria are present or if the lump occurs for other reasons, such as cancer. Be sure that you tell your doctor if you have any changes in your vision.

### How is it treated?

Sometimes a chalazion will go away without treatment. Usually, you will need to put warm compresses on the closed eyelid. A warm compress is a clean washcloth moistened with warm water. You may need to apply compresses for at least 3 to 5 minutes at a time, 2 to 4 times a day, for several days. The moist heat helps to reduce inflammation and may help remove the plug that is blocking the oil gland. If compresses do not relieve your symptoms, your doctor may prescribe steroids in the form of eyedrops or shots into the lump. Other treatment may include antibiotics in the form of eyedrops, ointment, pills, or shots. If the chalazion is still present after several weeks, an ophthalmologist may need to remove the lump during minor surgery. The surgery is generally safe and effective and is usually done with local anaesthesia.

### How long will the effects last?

Usually, the symptoms are gone in 6 weeks. Some people have chalazions frequently and may need to take medicine all the time.



**How can I help prevent a chalazion?**

You may be able to help prevent chalazions from coming back by using warm compresses and, in severe cases, medicines such as doxycycline. Ask your doctor if these treatments might work for you.

**Please contact us directly on 02 9635 0663 for general queries - for any urgent or After-hours Emergencies please contact Sydney Eye Hospital 9382 7111 and speak to the eye registrar.**