



[Home](#) → [Medical Encyclopedia](#) → Chalazion

URL of this page: [//medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001006.htm](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001006.htm)

# Chalazion

A chalazion is a small bump in the eyelid caused by a blockage of a tiny oil gland.

## Causes

A chalazion is caused by a blocked duct in one of the meibomian glands. These glands are located in the eyelid directly behind the eyelashes. They produce a thin, oily fluid that lubricates the eye.

## Symptoms

A chalazion often develops following an internal hordeolum (also called a sty). The eyelid most often becomes tender, red, swollen and warm. Sometimes, the blocked gland causing the sty will not drain even though the redness and swelling go away. The gland will form a firm nodule in the eyelid that is not tender. This is called a chalazion.

## Exams and Tests

An exam of the eyelid confirms the diagnosis.

Rarely, skin cancer of the eyelid may look like a chalazion. If this is suspected, you may need a biopsy.

## Treatment

A chalazion will often go away without treatment in a month or so.

- The first treatment is to place warm compresses over the eyelid for 10 to 15 minutes at least four times a day. Use lukewarm water (no hotter than you can leave your hand in comfortably). This may soften the hardened oils blocking the duct, and lead to drainage and healing.
- DO NOT push or squeeze the chalazion.

If the chalazion continues to get bigger, it may need to be removed with surgery. This is most often done from the inside of the eyelid to avoid a scar on the skin.

Steroid injection is another treatment option.

## Outlook (Prognosis)

Chalazia most often heal on their own. The outcome with treatment is excellent in most cases, but they may return after they have initially healed.

## Possible Complications

You may lose some eyelashes or you may end up with a small notch in the edge of the eyelid. Rarely, a healed chalazion will leave a small scar on the skin of the eyelid. These problems are more common if you've had surgery for the chalazion.

## When to Contact a Medical Professional

Contact your health care provider if lumps on the eyelid continue to get bigger despite treatment, or you have an area of eyelash loss.

## Prevention

Applying warm compresses daily, then scrubbing the lid at the eyelash line may help prevent chalazia and styes. Use eye cleansing pads or diluted baby shampoo for this.

If your provider has prescribed antibiotic ointment, apply it to the lash line after using warm compresses and scrubs.

## Alternative Names

Meibomian gland lipogranuloma

## References

American Academy of Ophthalmology website. What are chalazia and styes?  
[www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-are-chalazia-styes](https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-are-chalazia-styes) [https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/what-are-chalazia-styes]  
. Updated June 14, 2023. Accessed October 28, 2024.

Cioffi GA, Liebmann JM. Diseases of the visual system. In: Goldman L, Cooney KA, eds. *Goldman-Cecil Medicine*. 27th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2024:chap 391.

Durand ML. Periocular infections. In: Bennett JE, Dolin R, Blaser MJ, eds. *Mandell, Douglas, and Bennett's Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases*. 9th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2020:chap 116.

Neff AG, Chahal HS, Carter KD. Benign eyelid lesions. In: Yanoff M, Duker JS, eds. *Ophthalmology*. 6th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2023:chap 12.7.

## Review Date 10/2/2024

Updated by: Audrey Tai, DO, MS, Athena Eye Care, Mission Viejo, CA. Also reviewed by David C. Dugdale, MD, Medical Director, Brenda Conaway, Editorial Director, and the A.D.A.M. Editorial team.

**Learn how to cite this page**



Health Content  
Provider  
06/01/2028

The information provided herein should not be used during any medical emergency or for the diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. A licensed medical professional should be consulted for diagnosis and treatment of any and all medical conditions. Links to other sites are provided for information only – they do not constitute endorsements of those other sites. No warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, is made as to the accuracy, reliability, timeliness, or correctness of any translations made by a third-party service of the information provided herein into any other language. © 1997-2025 A.D.A.M., a business unit of Ebix, Inc. Any duplication or distribution of the information contained herein is strictly prohibited.



---

National Library of Medicine 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20894 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
National Institutes of Health