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### **What to do if you or your child has a bump on the eyelid or a chalazion or sty?**

A chalazion is a localized bump in the eyelid of varying sizes. More than one chalazion can occur in an eyelid at the same time, and both upper and lower eyelids may be affected. A chalazion can occur on one or both eyes.

Small glands lining the edge of the eyelids produce oil that helps to lubricate the surface of the eye (meibomian glands). When one of these glands becomes blocked, oil backs up inside the gland and forms a bump in the eyelid. If the gland ruptures, the oily materials can irritate the surrounding eyelid skin causing it to become red, swollen and painful.

A chalazion is not exactly the same thing as a sty, although the terms are often used interchangeably. We call the bump a sty when it becomes infected. It is like a small abscess on the edge of the eyelid. A chalazion is an accumulation of material in the eyelid as a result of a blocked oil gland.

### **What are the treatment options?**

Warm compresses over the affected area can promote drainage of the blocked gland. Oral antibiotics may be used if the chalazion is associated with bacterial infection of the surrounding eyelid tissues. Some antibiotics have an anti-inflammatory effect and can be used to prevent recurrence. A large, swollen, or persistent chalazion requires surgical drainage. Although adults can undergo the procedure in a doctor's office under local anesthesia, general anesthesia is usually necessary to drain chalazia in young children. Large, chronic chalazion could exert mass effect on the surface of the eye (cornea), causing astigmatism and decreased vision. In young children, this possible complication needs to be monitored, because it could cause amblyopia in rare cases, if the blurry vision continues. Occasionally, spectacle correction is needed to improve vision and prevent amblyopia in cases where the chalazion is not drained and it continues to cause astigmatism.

### **How can chalazia be prevented?**

A consistent daily regimen of eyelid scrubs using watered down baby shampoo on a warm washcloth daily or using commercially available, pre-moistened eyelid cleansing wipes, like Ocusoft Baby, Ocusoft plus, Ocusoft Demodex, or Ocusoft allergy can reduce the chances of developing new chalazia. This is especially useful when blepharitis is present. For those with a recurrent problem, regular use of topical or oral antibiotics is sometimes prescribed. We also recommend omega 3 supplements like Barleans Total Omega Orange Swirl is a tasty Omega 3 liquid which has helped prevent recurrences in some people. Also, regular use of warm compresses can also be effective in combination with the above-mentioned options.