

Patient information factsheet

Red eyelid lump (chalazion)

A red lump on your upper or lower eyelid is usually a cyst-like swelling called a chalazion (or meibomian cyst). A chalazion can develop if the glands in your eyelid (the meibomian glands) are blocked, infected or inflamed. It can cause tenderness and irritation, and it may become more swollen and painful if it gets infected or very inflamed.

You might also find that the chalazion causes your vision to blur slightly. This may be because the lump presses on your eye or causes your eye to water.

A chalazion can sometimes burst through the skin or through the inner lining of the eyelid, causing a mucous discharge.

Treating a chalazion

A hot compress can help with the discomfort and encourage the chalazion to drain. Hold a clean flannel soaked in hot (but not scalding) water firmly against your closed eyelid for five minutes. Do this four times a day.

Gently massage the cyst after the hot compress to encourage the cyst to drain. Use a clean finger or a cotton bud and work in the direction of the lashes.

Ask your local pharmacist for a course of chloramphenicol ointment. You can apply this ointment four times a day for 10 to 14 days.

If the redness and swelling grow beyond the lump or if you have a temperature, contact your GP. They may prescribe oral antibiotics.

If your condition progresses rapidly, the eyelid swelling starts to close the eye or the eye becomes red, you may need to see an eye doctor. Please contact eye casualty on telephone: **023 8120 6592**.

Getting better

The redness and inflammation of a chalazion will normally settle within six weeks. If it doesn't, please contact your GP for an appointment.

When the chalazion settles, it may leave a painless but firm lump on your eyelid for several months.

If it is still there after six months and is causing discomfort or affecting your eyesight, you may need to have surgery. Please ask your GP for referral to the eye unit.

Useful links

For further information, please speak to a member of our eye casualty team on telephone: **023 8120 6592**.
www.nhs.uk/conditions/eyelid-problems/Pages/Introduction.aspx

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Contact us

Eye unit
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
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If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audiotape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.