

WHAT IS A CHALAZION?

A chalazion is a small bump on the eyelid. You can have more than one at a time. They can happen on the upper and the lower eyelids, in one or both eyes.



Fig. 1: A chalazion is a bump in the eyelid.

WHAT CAUSES A CHALAZION?

Tiny glands (Meibomian Glands) in the eyelids make oil to keep the eyes wet. Sometimes the glands get blocked. Then, the oil backs up inside the eyelid and makes a bump. This can make the eyelid red, puffy, and sore.

IS A CHALAZION THE SAME THING AS A STYE?

Not really. A chalazion is from a blocked oil gland. A stye (hordeolum) is when an eyelid gland gets infected. It is like a small abscess or “boil” on the edge of the eyelid.

WHY DO PEOPLE GET CHALAZIA?

Most of the time, we don't really know why. Sometimes reasons people get chalazia are:

- Inflamed eyelids (blepharitis)
- Not keeping eyelids clean
- Rubbing their eyes a lot
- Skin problems like rosacea
- Body and hormone changes in puberty
- Body immune system problems

HOW ARE CHALAZIA TREATED?

Most chalazia go away on their own in a few days or weeks. Some things can help it get better faster, like:

- Putting something warm on the eyelid (cloth, heated pad)
- Special eye drops or creams from a doctor

If the chalazion is big or does not go away, it may need surgery. Kids usually need to go to sleep (under anesthesia) for this surgery. Some older children and adults can have the surgery awake in a doctor's office.

Big chalazia that don't go away can cause eye problems, especially in young kids.

HOW CAN CHALAZIA BE PREVENTED?

- Keeping the eyelids clean with baby shampoo or special eyelid wipes
- Taking omega-3, fish oil or flaxseed oil
- Some people might need to take medicine from a doctor

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