

Chalazion

There are approximately 30 glands in the upper and lower eyelids that are responsible for producing oil that stabilizes your tear film. These glands are called meibomian glands. The oil produced by meibomian glands protect your tears from evaporating. Occasionally, one of these meibomian glands can become blocked and backfill causing a red swollen lump on your upper or lower eyelid, called a chalazion.

A chalazion is not an infection and therefore does not usually respond to simple antibiotic treatment.

THE TREATMENT FOR A CHALAZION USUALLY STARTS WITH:

1. A warm compress that will heat up the blocked oil gland.
2. Eyelid massage in order to help the blocked gland drain.
3. Occasionally, medication can be used to decrease inflammation and promote drainage of the blocked oil gland.
4. Surgery or a steroid injection may be necessary to treat a chalazion that is not responsive to the above treatment.

Surgery by an eyelid surgeon involves giving a local anesthetic injection. A clamp is used to evert the eyelid and an incision on the inside of your eyelid to drain the blocked oil gland. Surgery may not always be successful. A chalazion can recur and does not always go away completely.

A chalazion, if left untreated, will usually become smaller, less red, and harder as the gland stops producing oil. An untreated chalazion should not cause vision loss or other problems with the health of your eye. Rarely, a chalazion can lead to an infection of the skin called cellulitis and require oral or IV antibiotic treatment. If your symptoms worsen at any time or you have any significant increase in pain, discharge, redness or any vision loss, you should be re-evaluated as soon as possible.

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