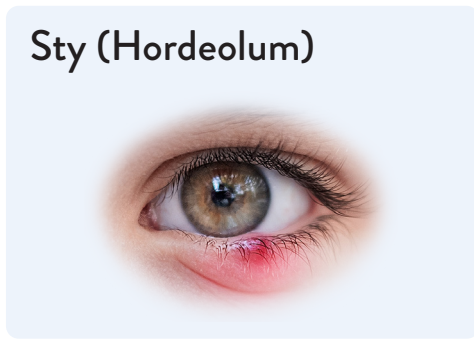


# Sty (Hordeolum) & Chalazion



## What is a sty?

A sty (also called a hordeolum) is a red, painful bump that forms on the eyelid. It happens when a tiny gland near your eyelashes gets inflamed. A sty can make your eyelid swollen and sore. Sometimes, it can look like a pimple.

## What is a chalazion?

A chalazion is a bump on the eyelid that is not usually painful. It happens when an oil gland in the eyelid gets blocked. A chalazion may start small but can get bigger over time.

FEATURE	STY (HORDEOLUM)	CHALAZION
Onset	Abrupt (1 day)	Gradual (days to weeks)
Location	Near eyelashes	Further back on eyelid
Site	Upper or lower eyelid	Upper or lower eyelid
Swelling	Yes	Yes
Redness	Yes	Sometimes
Pain	Yes	No or mild
Drainage	May look like a pimple, may cause crusting	No
Cause	Inflamed oil gland	Blocked oil gland
Typical time to resolve	1-2 weeks	Several months

## How do you treat a sty or chalazion?

*Both a sty and chalazion respond well to treatment at home.*

### Warm Compress

Heat helps open the clogged gland.

- Buy a warm compress or make one by heating a clean sock filled with dry rice in the microwave for 30 seconds.
- Gently hold the compress on your child's closed eyelid for 5-10 minutes.
- Keep your child still by using a distraction like a favorite video.
- Repeat this 2-4 times a day.

### Lid Scrubs

Gentle scrubbing helps remove the clog and massage promotes drainage.

- Put a small amount of baby shampoo (no tears formula) on a warm, wet washcloth as the warmth can help soften the skin.
- Gently rub the closed eyelid back and forth over the eyelashes.

## Do over-the-counter (OTC) eye drops help?

OTC drops only help if your child has itchy, watery eyes from allergies, which can make them rub their eyes. If needed, use an OTC 24-hour antihistamine eye drop to reduce itchiness.

### Tip for eye drops if your child is nervous:

1. Have them lie down and close their eyes.
2. Place a drop in the inner corner (near the nose).
3. Ask your child to open their eye(s) so the drop can roll in.
4. Encourage them to reclose their eye(s) for a few minutes, as blinking can wash away the medicine.

## Do antibiotics help?

Although normal skin surface bacteria can contribute to the development of styes, antibiotic therapy is not indicated unless infection develops in the eye or skin. It is important to avoid unnecessary antibiotic use to prevent resistance, so they work when really needed.

Your doctor will consider antibiotics (drops, ointment, or rarely oral) if the following develop:

- The eyelid becomes red/swollen beyond the bump.
- The eyeball turns red, and discharge makes the eyelashes stick together.
- Sometimes for recurring styes, if caused by rosacea-associated blepharitis.
- Never for chalazion.

## When should my child see a doctor?

- If the bump gets bigger or more painful
- If the bump does not go away after trying compresses
- If your vision is blurry
- If your eye is very red or swollen
- If you are worried

## What can I do to prevent recurrence?

- Wash your hands regularly.
- Try not to rub your eyes.
- Keep your eyelids clean.
- Remove eye makeup before bed. Refresh every 6 months to avoid bacterial contamination.
- If you wear contact lenses, use disposable, or disinfect daily.

## Does my child need to see a specialist?

Eye doctors mainly offer steroid injections or surgery, which are only needed if:

- The bump won't resolve with eye compresses and lid scrubs (styes > 2 weeks or the chalazions > 2 months)
- The bumps return frequently
- A rare complication occurs