Treating your child's meibomian cyst at home

Ophthalmology Department

Information for Patients

Last reviewed: September 2026

Next review: September 2029

Leaflet number: 819 Version: 4

What is a meibomian cyst?

Meibomian cysts form when the glands of the eyelid become blocked. These glands make the oily part of tears which stops the eyes from becoming dry. You can get the cysts on the upper or the lower eyelid. A meibomian cyst is also called chalazion.

This is not a serious condition. It can cause discomfort or soreness in some cases. Vision is not affected. Large lumps on the eyelid may stop the eye from opening fully.

How do you treat it?

Cysts often get better slowly by themselves. Doing the following can also help:

1. Take a cotton wool pad. Soak it in water which has been boiled and then cooled just enough that it is not uncomfortable to touch.
2. Squeeze out the water in the cotton wool pad and place it on the affected eye.
3. Massage in a circular motion until the cotton wool pad is cool.
4. Repeat this for at least 10 minutes, 2 times a day. Do this for at least 4 weeks.

Most cysts will clear up this way.

Antibiotics may sometimes be needed.

The eye doctor may recommend surgery but this is very rare.

How do you prevent a meibomian cyst?

It is not always possible to prevent meibomian cysts. If the eyelids are sticky or crusty this makes them more likely to form. Keeping the eyelids clean can help stop this from happening.

Use the same method as already described with the cotton wool pad, but also gently rub the eyelashes. Or, use a cotton wool bud which has been dipped in water (warmed as already described) and rub gently along the line of the eyelashes.

Questions

If you have any other questions about meibomian cysts, just ask the eye specialist when you visit the hospital.

Important

Please let us know if you cannot keep your appointment. If you do not attend an appointment, you will be discharged. This is part of Trust policy.

Contact details

Orthoptic Department, Leicester Royal Infirmary

Tel: **0116 258 5277**

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Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals.
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

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