

Treating your child's meibomian cyst at home

Ophthalmology Department

Information for Parents

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What is a meibomian cyst?

Meibomian cysts form when the glands of the eyelid become blocked. These glands produce the oily part of tears which stops the eyes from becoming dry. The cyst can appear on the upper or the lower eyelid. A meibomian cyst may also be referred to as a chalazion.

This is not a serious condition but may cause discomfort or soreness in some cases. Vision is not affected, although large lumps on the eyelid may prevent the eye from opening fully.

How do you treat a meibomian cyst?

Cysts usually get better slowly by themselves. However, the following treatment can help:

1. Take a cotton wool pad and soak it in water which has been boiled and then cooled just enough that it is not uncomfortable to touch.
2. Squeeze out 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, 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.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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

How do you prevent a meibomian cyst?

It is not always possible to prevent meibomian cysts, but 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 Trust policy states that you should be discharged.

Contact details

Orthoptic Department, Leicester Royal Infirmary

Tel: 0116 258 5277

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