



Chalazion: Patient Information and Treatment Guide

This guide answers common questions about chalazia, including symptoms, treatment options, and what to expect if a procedure is recommended. It is intended as general information only, as every patient is different. Miss Stephanie West will discuss your individual situation with you and answer any questions you may have.

What is a chalazion?

A chalazion is a small, usually painless lump that develops on the eyelid when one of the oil glands becomes blocked. These glands, known as meibomian glands, sit along the eyelid margin and produce an oily layer that helps keep the eyes comfortable and lubricated.

What are the symptoms of a chalazion?

Common symptoms of a chalazion include:

- A small lump on the eyelid, typically 2-8 mm in size
- Mild irritation or discomfort, especially when it first appears
- Occasional redness and swelling around the lump
- In rare cases, blurred vision if the chalazion is large enough to press on the eye

What causes a chalazion?

A chalazion forms when a meibomian gland becomes blocked, causing oil to collect and form a cyst. This blockage can be associated with:

- Blepharitis (inflammation of the eyelids)
- Skin conditions like eczema
- Thickening of the oil produced by the glands

How is a chalazion treated?

Most chalazia settle on their own over a period of weeks to months. The following steps may help encourage healing:



1. **Warm compresses:** Apply a warm, damp cloth to the affected eyelid for 10-15 minutes, 3-4 times a day. This helps soften the oil and encourage drainage
2. **Gentle massage:** After applying the warm compress, gently massage the eyelid to help express the blocked oil
3. **Eyelid hygiene:** Keep your eyelids clean by gently washing them with baby shampoo or a mild soap
4. **Avoid eye makeup:** Refrain from using eye makeup until the chalazion heals

If the chalazion does not improve after a few weeks, or if it becomes inflamed or infected, please seek medical advice. Miss Stephanie West may recommend:

- Antibiotic drops/ointments or oral antibiotics for infection
- Steroid drops/ointment to reduce inflammation
- Minor surgery to drain the chalazion

When should I seek medical advice?

Please contact your doctor or eye specialist if:

- The chalazion doesn't improve after a few weeks of home treatment
- You experience increasing pain, redness, or swelling
- Your vision becomes affected
- You have recurring chalazia

How can I reduce the risk of further chalazia?

To help reduce the risk of developing further chalazia:

- Practice good eyelid hygiene
- Treat any underlying skin conditions
- Remove eye makeup before sleeping
- Use warm compresses regularly if you're prone to chalazia
- Increase Omega 3 in your diet



If chalazia continue to recur despite these measures, Miss Stephanie West may recommend antibiotic drops or a short course of oral antibiotics.

Incision and curettage procedure

Incision and curettage is a minor procedure used to treat a persistent chalazion that has not responded to more conservative treatment. The key points are outlined below.

Preparation

- The area around the eye is cleaned and sterilized.
- Local anaesthetic is injected into the eyelid to numb the area.
- A small clamp may be placed on the eyelid to help expose the chalazion.

Procedure steps

1. A small incision is made on the inner surface of the eyelid or occasionally on the skin side.
2. The contents of the chalazion are drained and scraped out using a small curette (a spoon-shaped surgical instrument).
3. The area is thoroughly cleaned to remove any remaining debris.
4. The incision is usually left open to heal naturally, without stitches.

Duration and recovery

- The procedure typically takes around 15 to 20 minutes.
- Most patients can go home the same day.
- A pad may be placed over the eye for approximately two hours after the procedure.

Aftercare

- Clean the eyelid gently with cooled boiled water and clean cotton wool.
- Cold compresses or ice packs can help reduce swelling.



- Use prescribed antibiotic ointment as directed.
- Avoid wearing contact lenses for about a week.
- Mild swelling and bruising are common and usually settle within a few days. Arnica may help reduce bruising for some patients.

Effectiveness and risks

Incision and curettage is generally a very effective treatment for chalazia. As with any procedure, however, there are some potential risks, including:

- Infection (rare)
- Recurrence of the chalazion
- Minor scarring
- Temporary changes in eyelid appearance

Although chalazia are usually harmless, it is important to monitor them and seek professional advice if you are concerned or if symptoms worsen.

For further advice: Please contact your eye clinic or orthoptist if you have any concerns about treatment, side effects, or follow-up appointments.