

Department of Ophthalmology

Paediatric Ophthalmology

Surgery to remove your child's cysts

This leaflet has been designed to provide information relating to your child's plan of care as a patient at this hospital.

Signs and symptoms

Your child's cyst will present as a small pinkish red lump along his/her top or bottom eyelash margin.



What is a Meibomian (or Chalazion) Cyst?

A Meibomian cyst is a swelling that occurs in the eyelid. Cysts occur when Meibomian oil glands get inflamed as a result of blepharitis. A low grade infection of the eyelid margin caused by skin bacteria. Symptoms of blepharitis include (naming a few): itchy, sore red eyelids with crusts and debris on the eyelashes.

They are normally painless, unless they get infected, in which case oral antibiotics may be needed.

Cysts differ from styes in that they are not usually tender/ painful. They may become acutely inflamed but, unlike a stye, usually point inside the lid rather than on the lid margin. A chalazion or meibomian cyst may take months to heal fully with treatment.

Early treatment with hot compresses can help the cyst to drain. As soon as you notice your child has a cyst:

- Apply hot compresses three times a day. Soak a clean flannel in hot water with several drops of baby shampoo in it. Apply to the cyst, resoak and apply the compress as necessary for about 10 minutes.
- Apply antibiotic cream to the lid margin after the hot compress for one week. Chloramphenicol ointment is available over the counter at your pharmacy.

How will it be removed?

If a cyst persists and becomes chronic, it may need to be removed with a simple operation. Older children (teenagers) will often cope with this under local anaesthetic, but younger children usually need a brief general anaesthetic for the procedure.

There may be some swelling and bruising around your child's eye following his/her surgery. This is normal and should settle within a few days.

If you would like more information surrounding your child's planned surgery in the Cambridge Eye Unit please request a copy of the following information leaflets:

'Welcome to the CEU' and 'Advice for Parents Following your Child's General Anaesthetic'.

Post operative care

Immediately after your child's surgery he/she may have a small pad covering his/her eye. If this is the case the pad will be removed one to two hours following their surgery, before your discharge home.

It is not necessary for your child's eye to be covered with a dressing or a protective shield for any longer than this following his/her operation.

We advise that your child does not go swimming, play with sand or wear make up for four weeks following their surgery.

Medication following surgery

Your child will be given some Chloramphenicol (antibacterial) ointment for use over the next week following his/her surgery. Please ask for a copy of the parent information leaflet called 'Eye care for your child' if you would like guidance about how to apply the ointment.

Your child may be a little uncomfortable for the first day following his/her surgery. Pain killing medication in the form of paracetamol and/ or ibuprofen should be enough to ease any discomfort experienced.

You will be advised regarding all of your child's medication upon his/her discharge.

Follow up care

It is not necessary for your child to be reviewed in the out patient clinic again following his/her surgery. If your general practitioner (GP) feels that it is necessary for your child to be reviewed by the Ophthalmologist again they will re-refer you to the clinic.

Benefits, risks and alternatives

Please discuss any concerns that you have regarding these topics with the medical team at your child's next consultation (please see the section below).

Contacts and further information

If you have any concerns relating to your child's immediate health please contact your GP. Alternatively, if the matter is a query relating to your child's diagnosis/ treatment and is non urgent, please be sure to ask your questions at your next outpatient appointment, or, contact one of the following:

Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist,
Department of Ophthalmology,
Clinic 3, Box 41,
Addenbrooke's Hospital,
Cambridge University Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust,
Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ
Secretary: (01223) 216700

Clinical Nurse Specialist for Paediatric
Ophthalmology,
Department of Ophthalmology,
Clinic 3, Box 41,
Addenbrooke's Hospital,
Cambridge University Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust,
Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ
Tel: (01223) 596414



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

Authors	Paediatric Ophthalmology
Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
Contact number	01223 245151
Publish/Review date	October 2010/October 2013
File name	Surgery_to_remove_your_child's_cysts
Version number/Ref	1/PIN2668