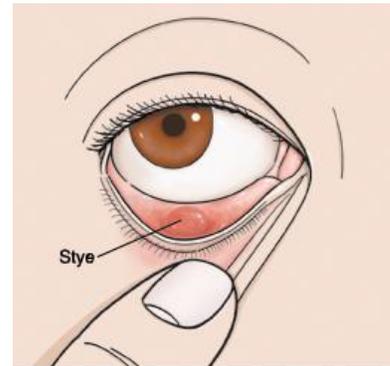


Sty (Hordeolum; also spelled stye)

What is a sty?

A sty is a swelling or bump on the eyelid. A sty is an infection caused by bacteria. It may be an infection of the hair follicle of the eyelash or one of the glands of the eyelid. It is like having a pimple on the eyelid. It is more common in children than adults. Normally a sty appears suddenly and is painful. The eyelid will be tender, red and swollen. If the infection drains, the lump will go away. Sometimes the bump stays after the pain and infection go away. The body can react to the infection, causing the bump to remain. Then it is called a chalazion.



How does a sty affect my child?

- A sty is not normally contagious. This means it is not likely to pass from one person to another.
- It may spread along the eyelashes.
- The white areas of the eye normally stay white.
- Children may say that their eyelid hurts and may rub their eyes.

How is a sty treated?

- Put a warm, moist compress on the eye for 15 minutes throughout the day. A washcloth soaked in warm water works well as a compress. Wring out the water in the washcloth so that it does not drip before using it. It can take months for the bump to go away.
- Clean the eyelids daily with a no tears baby shampoo. Put on with water and a tissue.
- Your health care provider may prescribe eye drops or eye ointment.
- Your child does not need to stay home from daycare or school if they have a sty.
- Your child should avoid rubbing the affected eye. If your child does rub the eye, have your child wash their hands with soap and water.
- If the sty does not heal after several months with this treatment, your child may need to see an eye doctor. It may need to be surgically removed under general anesthesia.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has:

- Redness, swelling or pain that has spread around the eye or eyelid.
- Blurry vision, double vision or sensitivity to light that gets worse.
- A temperature over 102° F. (38.9° C).
- Small blister-like sores close to the eye.
- No improvement after several months.
- Special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.