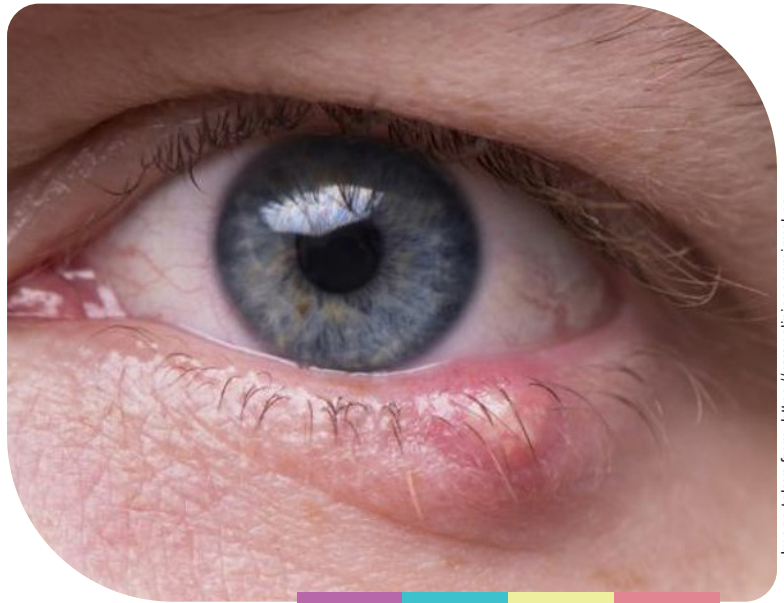


Learn About a **Stye**

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1. What is a stye and how does it manifest?

A stye (or hordeolum) is a painful, reddish inflammation on the edge of the eyelid, similar to a small bump or "pimple."

2. Who can get a stye?

It can affect anyone at any age.

3. What is the cause of a stye, where are they located, and what are the types?

A stye is generally caused by a bacterial infection, which is located in one of the sebaceous glands of the eyelid.

Types of Styes

- **External Stye (Hordeolum externum):** Appears at the root of an eyelash, making it more visible.

- **Internal Stye (Hordeolum internum):** Forms inside the upper or lower eyelid, which may be imperceptible in the initial stage, and results from the infection of a gland that normally produces oil to lubricate the eyes.

4. What complications can a stye cause?

It is generally not a serious condition, but it can be complicated by an extension to deeper tissues, leading to the accumulation of purulent fluid in the skin or behind the eye, which is called cellulitis (see Letter 77) or abscesses (see Letter 113). After the stye is controlled, it may cause a scar or loss of eyelashes.

5. When to consult a doctor?

If, after 3 to 5 days of managing with warm compresses and hygiene, there is no improvement or if the symptoms progress rapidly, you should consult a general physician or a visual health specialist (ophthalmologist).

6. How is a sty diagnosed?

The diagnosis is made by considering the presence of the following symptoms:

- Eyelid pain.
- Localized swelling.
- Redness.
- Tearing (watery eyes).
- Sensation of having something in the eye.
- In some cases, pus may be present.
- And most importantly, the evaluation by a healthcare professional.

7. How is a sty treated?

- Apply warm compresses (3–4 times a day, 10–15 minutes) to help the sty drain.
- Do not squeeze or pop the sty.
- Maintain good ocular hygiene.
- In more severe cases, the doctor may prescribe antibiotics or even perform a small internal or external incision to drain the sty.

8. Is it possible to prevent a sty?

It is possibly yes, by following these general hygiene habits:

Hand washing:

- Wash your hands often, especially before touching your eyes or handling contact lenses.

Avoid touching your eyes:

- Do not touch your eyes with dirty hands to prevent the transfer of bacteria.

Do not share personal items:

- Do not share towels, handkerchiefs, or makeup products with other people.

Clean devices:

- Keep frequently touched surfaces clean, such as phone screens and keyboards, among others.

Makeup care:

- Remove Makeup: Completely remove eye makeup before going to bed.
- Do not use makeup that has passed its expiration date or is old, and do not use mascara and liquid eyeliner three months after opening them.

Contact lens care:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly before putting in or taking out contact lenses.
- Follow Instructions: Disinfect contact lenses according to product instructions and always use an appropriate solution for storage.
- Respect Usage Time: Use contact lenses only for the time recommended by the manufacturer and do not wear them for more hours than indicated.

Clean eyelids:

- Clean the edges of the eyelids daily with a diluted baby shampoo or a specific product for eye cleaning.

Perform gentle massages:

- If you are prone to styes, you can gently massage your eyelids to remove excess oil.

Web pages consulted

- American Academy of Ophthalmology
- NHS website
- Mayo Clinic Family Health Book

See health letters

- Health letter 77: Learn about Cellulitis
- Health letter 113: Learn about Abscesses

