



Pediatric  
Eye Specialists

## Blepharitis and Chalazion

### DEFINITIONS

Blepharitis is the medical term for inflammation of the eyelids. There are many causes of blepharitis but the most common is irritation and inflammation of the tiny oil glands that are in a row just behind the eyelashes (Meibomian glands) or build up of debris at the base of the eyelashes. A chalazion is a bump that forms in the eyelid when one of the oil glands becomes blocked. The secretions build up and form a bump that resembles a sty. This bump may become painful if it becomes infected or there is much inflammation from the build up of secretions. The most common signs and symptoms of blepharitis are burning and irritation sometimes associated with tearing or redness of the eyelids and eyes. Blepharitis and chalazion often respond to medical treatment with warm compresses, cleaning of the eyelids and lashes with a mild soap, or treatment with antibiotic and steroid ointment or drops. Occasionally an oral antibiotic is used in older children or adults to reduce inflammation. If a chalazion persists for several weeks or months and does not respond to initial treatment, a minor surgery to open the gland and clean out the built up secretions may be necessary.

### ALTERNATIVES

Before recommending chalazion surgery, Dr. Packwood, Hunt, or Norman will have carefully considered whether there has been an adequate response to medical treatment. Chalazion and blepharitis rarely affect vision so medical therapy is often used for several weeks or months before a decision to perform surgery is made.

### RISKS

As with any surgery, there is a small risk of infection after surgery. An antibiotic ointment is often used for 1 week after surgery to prevent infection. There is usually a small amount of bleeding with the surgery and the patient may have some blood stained tears for a few hours after surgery.

### LENGTH OF SURGERY

Generally chalazion surgery is completed within 15-20 minutes, although this may vary slightly depending on the complexity of the case. After the surgery, Dr. Packwood, Norman, or Hunt will find the family in the waiting area to discuss the operation.

### TIME OF OPERATION

The time you have been given for the operation is tentative and may need to be changed on the day of surgery. In general, patients are taken by age with the youngest going first.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY

No food or milk is permitted after midnight. Medicines may be taken with sips of water. Only apple juice, Sprite, Kool Aid, and water may be taken up to three hours before the admission time.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS ACUTELY ILL (HAS A FEVER, DEEP COUGH OR VOMITING) IN THE DAYS PRECEDING SURGERY, please call us at (817) 878-5454.**

## ANESTHESIA

The anesthesia doctor may order a preoperative oral sedative medication. Young children are put to sleep within seconds by breathing gas from a mask held near their face. An intravenous (IV) line and a breathing tube (endotracheal tube) are placed only after they are asleep and the breathing tube is removed before they are fully awake.

Children age 13 or older who are not unduly frightened may be given an IV line beforehand so that sedative medications can be administered. Depending on the special needs or medical condition of a patient, the anesthesiologist may slightly alter the routine.

## POST-OPERATIVE DISCOMFORT AND NAUSEA

There may be mild discomfort from the surgery, and the nurses will treat it with the appropriate medication. Tylenol may also be used at home for mild pain. Mild nausea is common. If vomiting occurs, medication may be prescribed.

## DISCHARGE TO HOME AND FOLLOW-UP

Most patients are discharged to home within one to two hours after surgery. If there is no skin breakdown from the chalazion, often a post-operative call to ensure healing is going well is all that is needed. If there is skin breakdown or other concerns, a short post-operative visit is scheduled approximately one week after surgery..

## POST-OPERATIVE CARE AND ACTIVITY

Eye drops or ointment may be used to help healing and prevent infection in the first week after surgery. The medicines come in bottles or tubes and may be given to you by a nurse at the time of discharge. The patient can resume all normal activities the day after surgery. Younger children often play within hours after surgery, though some children may be tired for a day or two. Some children feel sleepy or grouchy or even vomit the day after surgery. Your child can return to day-care or to school within days following surgery.