


Health Tips

Your Good Health Information From eDocAmerica

with

Dr. D


 Printer Friendly


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Health Tip: A Stye in the Eye



A stye is one of the most common eye complaints that we hear about at eDocAmerica. They are caused by inflammation or infection of an oil (meibomian) gland that resides on the edge of the eyelid. They appear as red, swollen bumps, similar to a pimple. Styes are typically tender to touch and may cause other eye-related complaints such as a gritty, scratchy sensation when opening and closing the eyelids, tearing,

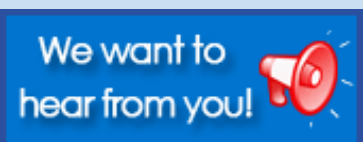
sensitivity to light and crusting of the eyelid margins.

Why do styes develop? Inflammatory diseases of the eyelid, such as blepharitis and rosacea, the use of outdated or infected cosmetics, and poor eyelid hygiene can all lead to the development of a stye. Once the opening to the oil gland becomes plugged, the stage is set for invasion by bacteria. The great majority of styes are secondarily infected by Staph bacteria.

What can I do for a stye? In most cases, it is appropriate to initiate self-care measures for styes without consulting with a doctor. At home treatment is as follows:

- Apply a warm washcloth to the eye for 10 minutes, four times a day
- Don't squeeze the stye. It should be allowed to "come to a head" and drain on its own
- Avoid using cosmetics on the eyelids while the stye is present.

any other topic or question you have!



- Wash your hands after applying the compresses or touching near the styte
- Don't wear contact lenses while treating a styte
- Use of a lubricating ointment or drops, such as Styte™ or Bausch and Lomb Eye Wash can help relieve eye dryness, but won't treat the underlying infection

When should a doctor be consulted for a styte? On occasion, self-care measures may be ineffective or inappropriate. In the following situations, it is best to see a doctor for treatment of a styte:

- When visual problems (blurring, double vision, etc.) accompany the styte
- If the styte does not improve after a week of self-care
- Should signs that the infection is spreading (swelling and redness of the eyelid, redness around the eye, etc.) develop
- If pus or thick discharge drains from the eye.
- If fever (temp > 101 degrees) occurs along with the styte
- When a styte recurs soon after the successful treatment of another one.

What can the doctor do for a styte? Should the styte warrant medical attention, treatment options include the use of topical antibiotic ointments or drops, lancing and draining, and in some cases, the use of oral antibiotics.



Can styes be prevented? Sometime styes develop without obvious cause. Measures that can help prevent the development of styes include good hygienic practices, such as regular hand washing, never sharing cosmetics, replacing eye makeup (especially mascara) at least every 6 months, and avoiding touching the eye and surrounding areas.

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11719 Hinson Road, Suite 130 Little Rock, Arkansas 72212

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