

Removal of cysts (children)

Ophthalmology

Your child has a cyst along the top or bottom edge of their eyelashes. It appears as a small, pinkish/red lump. An operation is required to remove it which will take place in our Day Surgery Unit under a general anaesthetic.

What is a meibomian (or chalazion) cyst?

A meibomian (or chalazion) cyst is a swelling that occurs in the eyelid. It occurs when meibomian oil glands get inflamed as a result of a low-grade infection of the eyelid margin caused by skin bacteria. It is normally painless but if it persists and becomes chronic a simple operation can remove it. The operation involves making a tiny cut into the cyst and removing the contents, usually on the inner surface of the eyelid.

What to expect in hospital

On arrival, you and your child will be greeted by your nurse and shown to your bed area. You will be seen by an anaesthetist (the doctor who puts your child to sleep) and your surgeon prior to the operation. They will check your child is well and confirm that the operation is still necessary. You will be asked to sign a consent form where the risks and benefits of the operation will be fully explained.

After the operation

Following the anaesthetic, it is likely that your child will feel tired and possibly tearful - this is due to the anaesthetic. They may have a drink on returning to the ward and will then be encouraged to rest. The nurse looking after you will be assessing your child regularly and will let you know when it is safe for them to eat.

Your child may have a small pad covering their eye. This will usually be removed before your child is discharged.

Painkillers will be given in theatre so your child should be comfortable on return to the ward. However, if your child experiences any pain, please tell the nurse looking after you and further painkillers will be given.

The nurse looking after you will be regularly assessing your child's eyes for any sign of bleeding, bruising and swelling.

Risks and complications

The removal of a cyst is a very safe procedure. However, there may be some swelling and bruising around the eye following surgery. This is normal and should settle in a few days.

Care at home

Eye care

When cleaning the eye, please use the following guidelines:

- Use a clean facecloth or tissues. **Avoid cotton wool** as it can leave behind fibres which may irritate the eye.
- Bathe the area around the eye with cooled boiled water using gentle sweeping movements. Start from the inside of the eye (by the nose) and move to the outside (towards the ear).
- If there is hardened discharge (crust) on your child's eyelid or lashes, apply a facecloth warmed with warm water to the closed eyelid for a few minutes.
- Use a clean facecloth every time you clean the eye.

It is advised that your child does not go swimming, play with sand or wear make up for 4 weeks following their operation. If necessary, your child will be given an antibacterial ointment to use following their operation.

Pain relief

Your child should be comfortable before discharge from the ward. Any pain at home should be controlled using paracetamol (Calpol) or ibuprofen (Nurofen). Please read the bottle for the correct dose for your child according to their age.

Eating and drinking

Your child may eat and drink normally.

Nausea and vomiting

Do not worry if your child feels sick or vomits once or twice after leaving hospital. The anaesthetic can cause this and it is not an uncommon side effect. If this occurs stop giving food for about an hour and try small amounts of water or diluted juice every 20 minutes, then try a light diet such as plain biscuits or toast. If your child continues to vomit, please call for advice or attend your GP or nearest Emergency Department.

Activity

Your child should be well enough to resume their normal routine 24-48 hours after the operation.

Follow-up

A follow-up appointment is not usually necessary but if your surgeon would like you to attend an outpatient clinic to discuss the results of the surgery, recovery and any additional treatment, this appointment will be sent to you by post.

Useful contact details

East and North Hertfordshire Teaching NHS Trust:

- Website www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk
- Telephone 01438 314333

Bluebell Ward, Lister Hospital:

- Telephone 01438 284008

Children's Day Surgery, Level 4, Lister Hospital:

- Telephone 01438 285775

Children's Emergency Department, Lister Hospital:

- Telephone 01438 284333

Urgent Care Centre, New QEII Hospital, Welwyn Garden City:

- Telephone 01707 247549

Eye Casualty Department, Treatment Centre, Lister Hospital:

- Telephone 01438 288117
Monday to Friday, 9am - 7pm
Saturday, 9am - 12 noon.

Ophthalmology Hub, Treatment Centre, Lister Hospital:

- Telephone 01438 286222

Leaflet information

Reference: Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Moorfield's Eye Hospital

**You can request this information in a different format or another language;
please speak to your doctor or nurse.**

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