CHALAZION

WHAT IS IT?
A chalazion is a chronic eyelid lesion that is hard and typically painless. It forms when an oil gland within the eyelid becomes blocked and inflamed.

A chalazion is different from a “stye”, which also causes a lump in the eyelid. A stye is caused by an infection and is painful. However, a stye that does not resolve may scar into a hard chalazion.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?
- A chalazion begins as a tender, red, swollen area that evolves into a firm, painless lump, typically seen in the middle of the eyelid.
- The upper eyelid is more commonly affected. If a chalazion forms on the lower eyelid, it can look like a yellow-white bump inside the eyelid.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?
Your medical provider will ask questions about your symptoms and examine your eye. No special testing is needed.

HOW IS IT TREATED?
Most chalazions resolve on their own without treatment over weeks to months.
- Warm compresses may help larger lesions drain and resolve faster.
  - Compresses should be applied for at least 10 minutes, 4 times a day.
  - Use either a warm washcloth or a plastic bag filled with warm mashed potatoes.
  - Symptoms usually resolve after a few weeks of treatment.
- Antibiotics are not helpful because a chalazion is not caused by an infection.
- Avoid squeezing or picking at your chalazion as this can lead to an infection of the eyelid.
- A referral to an ophthalmologist may be made if the chalazion is persistent and irritating. Treatment includes cutting out the chalazion or injecting the lesion with steroids.

RETURN TO STUDENT HEALTH IF...
- The lump on your eyelid gets bigger or painful.
- The whites of your eye become red.
- The redness or swelling spreads to your entire eyelid or other parts of your face.
- Your vision is affected.