

## EYELID PROBLEMS

**Most eyelid problems are harmless and are not serious.**

### Eyelid lumps

There are many different types of lumps that can occur in the eyelid or on the eyelid skin, these include:

- **Chalazion (meibomian cyst)**  
A small, hard lump(s) in the eyelid(s), that is usually not painful. This sometimes requires a small procedure to drain the cyst, and can be done under local anaesthesia (in the rooms) in adults.
- **Hordeolum/stye**  
A painful lump near the eyelashes, that is filled with pus like a pimple. This usually requires drainage, which can often be achieved just by removing the infected eyelash(es), and may require antibiotics.
- **Xanthelasma** (often associated with high cholesterol)  
Flat yellow patches/deposits in or under the eyelid skin.
- **Shingels/chicken pox**  
Blisters or scabs with a skin rash (on the face and/or body).
- **Skin cancer**  
A mole/freckle/patch/nodule that increases in size, and changes its shape and/or colour. This needs to be excised and sent away for testing to ensure that it has been completely removed.

### Swollen eyelid

Eyelid swelling could be due to an **allergic reaction** due to contact with something that you have an allergy to. It could also be due to an infection of the skin and/or deeper tissues called **cellulitis**. In the case of **cellulitis** the eyelid will also be red, hot and painful/tender; and you may feel unwell.

### Itchy/flaky/sticky eyelid

**Contact dermatitis** causes the eyelid(s) to be itchy, crusty or flaky after contact with something that you are allergic to; such as face washes/creams and cosmetics. Both **conjunctivitis** and **blepharitis** can cause the eyelids and eyes to be sticky and/or crusty (sometimes stuck together), itchy, red, and watery.

### Blinking or twitching eyelid

**Myokymia** refers to the uncontrollable quivering or twitching of the eyelid muscles, especially when you are tired. This is seldom serious, and usually gets better quickly and by itself.

Frequent blinking or twitching, sometimes with uncontrollable eye closing (**blepharospasm**) may be part of a movement disorder (dystonia) or a side effect of medication.

### Drooping eyelid and positional abnormalities of the eyelid

- **Ptosis/blepharoptosis**  
The edge of the upper eyelid “droops” down and covers the eye to a variable degree in one/both eyes. It may hang down very low and obstruct your vision – this can be dangerous in young children as their vision is still developing. A ptosis of sudden onset needs to be investigated, especially if associated with headache and other symptoms. Ptosis can also be corrected surgically; the eyelid is lifted slightly to correspond to the other eye and allow for unobstructed vision.

- **Dermatochalasis**

Excessive skin makes the upper eyelid heavy and pulls it down to cover the eye. The excess skin can be removed surgically (blepharoplasty).

- **Ectropion**

The lower eyelid becomes “floppy” or “droopy”, and it turns outwards. This causes constant tearing, as well as an abnormal and unsightly appearance. Surgery can be done to “tighten” the eyelid again and correct its position.

- **Entropion**

The lower (and/or upper) eyelid turns inwards towards the eye, and the eyelashes scratch the surface of the eye. Surgery can be done to correct the eyelid position and turn the eyelashes out and away from the eye again.