Eyelid Problems Encyclopedia Article

Eyelid Problems

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Eyelid Problems

Conditions or diseases that affect the eyelid.

There are a few common conditions that can affect a child's eyelids. A stye is a common problem that is easily treated. It appears as a red bump on the edge of the eyelid, and is caused by a bacterial infection in a hair follicle or sweat gland on the lid margin. Warm, moist compresses applied several times a day are a successful treatment. If the stye is stubborn, a **pediatrician** may prescribe an antibiotic ointment.

A chalazion is an inflammation of an oil gland in the underside of the eyelid. It appears as a small bump beneath the eyelid, accompanied by redness and mild discomfort. Like styes, chalazions can be treated with application of warm, moist compresses. Prescription antibiotic ointment or drops may also be necessary. Chalazions often recur, and if they are problematic, a pediatrician may recommend surgery to remove the affected gland.

Ptosis is a condition in which the eyelid or eyelids droop. In some cases it is present from birth, as the result of incomplete development of the muscles which hold up the lid. Rarely, it is the result of trauma to the cranial nerves at birth. Ptosis may also develop after birth because of some trauma to the eyelid, or because of an underlying disease such a myasthenia gravis. Ptosis may appear as a droopy, partially lowered lid, merely as a heavy or enlarged upper lid, or the lid may completely cover the eye. In the rare case of congenital ptosis in which the drooping lid covers the entire eye or pupil, the child may need immediate surgery to correct the condition, or else vision will not develop normally. In a milder case, surgery is also the advised treatment, but it is usually not done until the child is three or four years old.

For Further Study

Books

Collins, James F. *Your Eyes: An Owner's Guide.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1995.

Savage, Stephen. *Eyes.* New York: Thomson Learning, 1995.

Showers, Paul. *Look at Your Eyes.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.

Zinn, Walter J., and Herbert Solomon. *Complete Guide to Eyecare, Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses.* Hollywood, FL: Lifetime Books, 1995.

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