**Stye**

**What is a stye?**
A stye is a common bacterial infection of an eyelash follicle in the eyelid. The condition is more common in children and is sometimes associated with a condition called blepharitis, in which inflammation (irritation) and dandruff-like flakes develop around the roots of the eyelashes (see blepharitis leaflet).

The stye appears as a small, red and tender spot, with a yellow centre, at the bottom of an eyelash and can vary in size over time.

**What is the treatment?**
Many styes will recover with time and this can be helped by using warm compresses and cleaning the base of the eyelashes with a moistened cotton bud twice daily.

If possible, the doctor or nurse in A&E will use tweezers to gently remove the lash which will often encourage the stye to discharge. Antibiotic ointment to rub into the base of the lashes may sometimes be helpful.

Less commonly, a stye may cause a spreading infection along the surface of the lid which may need a course of antibiotics by mouth.

**Prevention**
To prevent styes from recurring, it may help to treat any underlying blepharitis by cleaning your eyelids on a daily basis (lid hygiene). See our blepharitis leaflet for details.

**When to seek advice**
If the eye becomes increasingly red or painful or your sight becomes more blurred, you should telephone Moorfields Eye Hospital Direct for advice on 020 7566 2345 or attend your local A&E department or the Moorfields 24/7 A&E department which is open for emergency eye problems only for a further examination.

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Author: Miss Claire Daniel, Miss Melanie Hingorani, Dr Swan Kang and Linda Langton
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Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
City Road, London EC1V 2PD  
Phone: 020 7253 3411  
www.moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields Direct telephone helpline  
Phone: 020 7566 2345  
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm  
Saturday, 9am-5pm  
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)  
Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325  
Email: moorfields.pals@nhs.net  
Moorfields’ PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks  
Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further – see above for contact details. For more information about your rights under the NHS, please visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs.