STYE (Hordeolum):

A stye is a bacterial infection of a gland in the upper or lower eye lid. This can lead to a bump or a swollen area on the lid that is often tender to the touch. Though uncomfortable these usually pose no threat to vision. The medical term for this type of infection is a Hordeolum.

The area of the eyelid that is swollen may vary depending on the location of the infection in the gland. A stye can appear as a bump with a “head” that may be seen on the surface of the lid. However, the “head” may also be under the lid, leading to diffuse swelling of the lid. These glands contribute to the production of tears and therefore the eye may feel gritty or scratchy with an active infection.

Treatment: The type of treatment will vary, depending on the amount of lid tissue involved and the spread of the infection to other glands.

In mild cases, treatment may be limited to warm compresses and gentle lid cleansing.
In moderate cases topical antibiotics may be added.
In severe cases where infection has spread throughout the lid oral antibiotics may be needed.

Risks Increases with:
* Diabetes
* Blepharitis (an infection of the eye lid margin)
* Chronic skin conditions (such as Acne)
* History of styes

Prevention:
Cleansing the eyelid margin with commercial “lid scrubs”, sterilids or baby shampoo can decrease the level of normal bacterial that lives there and reduce the risk of infection. Routinely discard eye makeup every 4 to 6 months and refraining from sharing eye makeup.

Complications:
The most common complication is the formation of scar tissue in the lid called a Chalazion. This is a firm knot in the lid that is not painful or red. This “lump” can be reduced with warm compresses and gentle massage. In more severe presentations surgical excision may be necessary. Rarely the infection can spread from the lid to the eye orbit and surrounding tissue. This is a more serious condition called Preseptal (or in more severe cases Orbital) Cellulitis which if left untreated can be life threatening. The progression to this condition is signified by the development of a fever. It is important not to squeeze or poke the stye as this can lead to the spread of the infection.

The UHC Vision Clinic is available to students, student's spouses/partners, faculty/staff, and dependents. It offers the full range of optometric care as well as a large retail inventory of frames and lenses.
Appointments are necessary and can be made online (students) or by phone.
Call 706-542-5617 or visit http://www.uhs.uga.edu/services/vision_clinic.html