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ENTROPION

What is entropion?

The eyelids are positioned so that their smooth edge is aligned with the eye. Entropion is when the eyelids are rolled inwards. This causes 'trichiasis', which means that the hairs which are normally around the eye, are now rubbing on the surface of the eye. This can cause several problems. The hairs irritate the eye, and cause it to produce more tears, resulting in a very moist eye. The hairs can abrade the cornea, causing a painful corneal ulcer. These corneal ulcers are difficult to heal because the hairs are constantly rubbing. The ulcer causes blood vessels to grow in the normally clear cornea, and this can lead to scarring, which interferes with vision. The ulcers can get so deep as to perforate the globe. If the animal is squinting or getting corneal ulcers, they are experiencing considerable pain.

Entropion can affect one eye or both eyes. It can affect both the upper and lower eyelids. It can affect the whole eyelid or just a portion of it. It can be present along with other eyelid abnormalities which also need repair, such as over-long eyelids, or a drooping facial mask.

What causes entropion?

Entropion is an inherited condition in many breeds. Less commonly, it can develop when the eyelids spasm because of a painful eye condition such as a corneal ulcer, and this is called spastic entropion. Spastic entropion resolves when local anaesthetic is put into the eye, and therefore this means that once the painful condition is treated, the entropion should resolve, unless excessive scarring has occurred. Entropion may be caused by over-long eyelids, a drooping facial mask, taut ligaments around the eye or may be developmental.

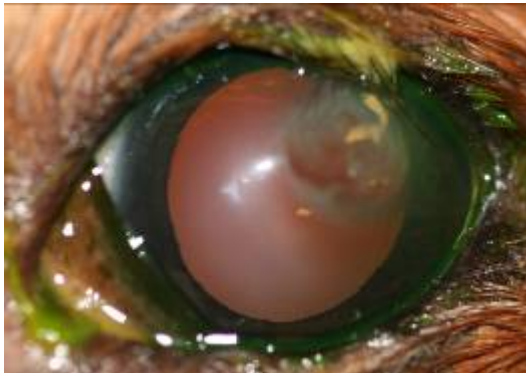
What are the signs of entropion?

Entropion is more common in younger dogs. It can develop as the shape of the face changes as the animal grows. It can also occur as a result of eyelid trauma in later life, or may become more apparent in the older dog if the tears become deficient (Dry Eye or Keratoconjunctivitis sicca, KCS).

The eye will be uncomfortable with moisture on the eyelids. Tears may overflow onto the face. The cornea may be red or scarred.

How is entropion diagnosed?

Your vet or veterinary ophthalmologist will be able to assess the position of the eyelids and damage to the cornea. Local anaesthetic may be applied to observe the effect it makes.



Entropion causing a corneal ulcer



Entropion in a young pup

What is the treatment for entropion?

In young puppies and kittens, the eyelid may be manually everted, or rolled out, several times a day. This reduces the cycle of spasm which is caused when the eyelid hairs irritate the cornea, and sometimes the inflammation subsides, leaving an eyelid in a normal position.

Temporary tacking sutures may be required. These are usually used in a young patient, in which growth has not yet stopped. Further growth of the skin on the face and changes in the shape of the skull can subtly alter the relationship between the eyelids and the eyeball. Thus, surgery done on a young animal may need to be repeated in later life in order to allow for the changing shape of the face. However, this does not alter the fact that the patient has a painful problem at present which needs correction.

Most cases need surgery. Hotz-Celsus procedure involves surgically removing a section of eyelid corresponding to the degree of rolled-in eyelid. When the two edges are sutured together, the eyelid is pulled outwards, replacing it into a normal position.

Additional procedures may need to be done at the same time, for example it may be appropriate to shorten the eyelids.

Alternate procedures such as the Stades procedure, where a larger area of skin is removed from the upper eyelid area, may be appropriate in certain cases, such as Cocker Spaniels.

Occasionally eyelid surgery needs to be repeated in order to get the most perfect result possible. It was normal procedure to under-correct the eyelid abnormality rather than to overcorrect it, as it is easier to fix with another procedure.



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What treatment is required after surgery?

- The eyelids may be a little swollen after surgery, and this is not unexpected.
- There will be stitches in the eyelids; these are usually very small and difficult to see. They are usually dissolvable and will fall out themselves after approximately two weeks.
- Your pet will be discharged with antibiotic ointment or drops. These will need to be administered as often as recommended.
- Keep the eyes clean. Gently wipe away any discharge with clean water (for example, previously boiled water) on some cotton wool. This should be done before applying eye medication.
- Where both drops and ointments are prescribed, the drop should be applied first. Wait at least five minutes before applying the ointment, as this acts as a greasy barrier which remains in the eye for longer.
- Your pet will be fitted with a buster collar, to prevent access to the eye and reduce the likelihood of complications such as stitches breaking down. It is important that this collar is left on at all times, even at night. This is to prevent your pet from rubbing at the stitches, and potentially needing further surgery to fix any damage done.
- Be observant. If there are any changes which you were not told to expect, please phone your vet or your veterinary ophthalmologist to discuss them.
- Usually a re-examination appointment will be scheduled after surgery to check on your pet's progress.

Above all, do not forget to phone for advice if you feel that you need it.