

Entropion

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Entropion is the inward rolling of all or part of the eyelid and can affect anywhere from one to all four of the eyelids. The result of this eyelid inversion is that the hair from the eyelid skin rubs on the corneal and conjunctival surfaces. With mild entropion, in which there is little inversion and contact with the ocular surfaces, there may only be low-grade discomfort and excessive tearing. When the irritation is severe, however, the patient will have chronic pain and serious injury can develop. Self-trauma, due to the irritation, can contribute to the overall damage as well. Entropion is a significant problem because if it remains uncorrected, it will persist as a chronic source of discomfort. Ultimately, sight can be affected because of corneal inflammation, scarring, pigmentation, and/or ulceration.

Most developmental (primary) entropion demonstrates a clear breed predisposition. Although the genetic basis has not yet been clearly defined, the problem is likely the results of genes responsible for overall head and facial conformation.

Most cases of primary entropion will develop by 6 months of age. Occasionally, spontaneous (primary/developmental) entropion will not appear until after 12 months of age, especially in large breeds of dogs. Entropion is usually a surgical disease. However, entropion in an immature animal may improve spontaneously with growth. Mild cases in young dogs may be managed medically or with temporary eyelid "tacking" sutures until maturity. Surgery might be delayed until the age of 4-6 months, except in severe and complicated cases.

Trauma, chronic inflammation, and painful eye diseases can lead to acquired or secondary entropion. "Spastic entropion", which results from eyelid spasms due to ocular pain, might resolve with placement of temporary tacking sutures and control of the underlying painful eye disease(s). It is more likely to resolve if addressed early and aggressively. Surgical correction might be necessary, but the entropion will recur if the underlying cause goes uncorrected or uncontrolled. The cause, location, and extent of entropion and presence of concurrent problems determine the corrective technique recommended.

Success Rates: The success rates with surgery vary somewhat based on the breed, age, and specifics of the case. In general, surgery is successful about 90-95% of the time. In up to 10% of patients, there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., young animal, recurrence or persistence of underlying causes if secondary entropion, other) that necessitate a second procedure.

