

Entropion/Ectropion

What is entropion/ectropion?

With entropion, your dog's eyelid margin folds into the eye with eyelashes contacting the eye and cornea. This usually occur with the lower lid. This can be very painful and if untreated can result in wounds to the cornea and reduced vision. Entropion is typically a developmental problem and is usually seen in young and rapidly growing dogs.

Ectropion is also an abnormality of the eyelid in which the eyelid (usually the lower lid) rolls outward and the lower eyelids appear "droopy" This results in inflammation of the lining (conjunctivae), eyelid drying, and pain. Ectropion is usually diagnosed in dogs less than one year.

What dogs are prone to these eyelid conditions?

Any dog can develop these conditions but breeds prone to these conditions frequently have poor eyelid conformation, saggy eyelids, or excess skin around the eyes and head (Braccos, Cocker spaniel, St Bernard, Bloodhound, Bernese mountain dog, Mastiff, Newfoundland, Bulldog, Chow, Spring Spaniel, Shar Pei, Irish Setter, Gordon Setter, Great Dane, Labrador Retriever, Rottweiler and standard Poodle).

What are the symptoms?

Ectropion again is usually seen in young dogs from birth. Ectropion exposes the delicate tissues that line the inner eyelid causing dryness, conjunctival inflammation, and pain. Corneal damage can result in corneal scarring.

Entropion can cause watery and mucoid discharge, eye rubbing, eye redness and squinting. This can present as chronic conjunctivitis. In chronic cases damage can lead to corneal ulceration and visual changes.

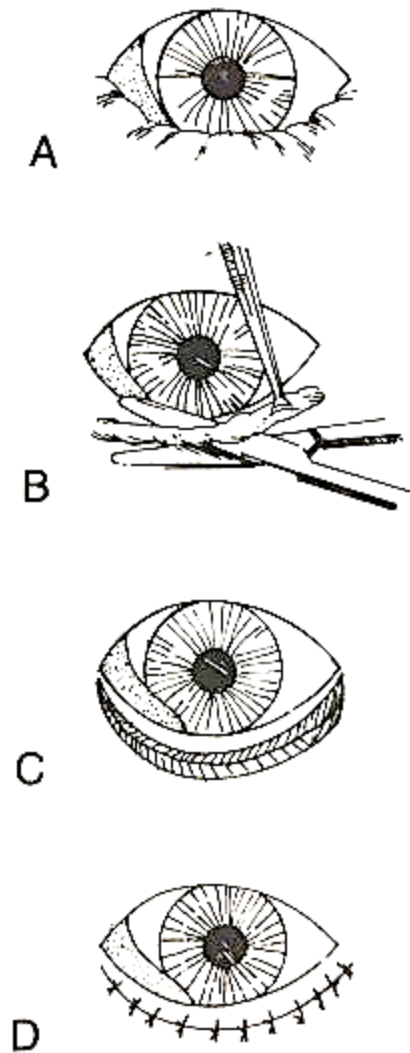
How are these conditions diagnosed?

Diagnosis is usually made by physical exam. Sometimes if the dog is older, blood and urine tests may be performed to search for an underlying causes (such as hypothyroidism, neuromuscular disease). Fluorescein dye testing of the cornea to determine if ulcers are present. Your primary vet can usually make the diagnosis but referral to a veterinary ophthalmologist will be needed for definitive care and possible surgery.

How are they treated?

The treatment of mild ectropion is generally medical with lubricating eye drops and ointments to prevent drying of cornea and conjunctivae. More severe ectropion involves surgical restoration of the normal contour of the eyelid. Surgical correction is usually successful.

Corrective surgery for entropion cannot be performed until puppies are close to their full adult size. But because entropion can damage the cornea and cause long-term scarring, puppies with this condition usually need a temporary reversal procedure to provide relief until permanent surgery can be done. Temporary palliative correction can be offered by eyelid tacking with sutures or staples, of injection of hyaluronic acid fillers to pull the eyelids up and away from the cornea. Adult dogs with entropion undergo surgery to permanently correct the eyelid position. A blepharoplasty is performed to remove an amount of eyelid so that the remaining lid fits well to the eyeball. Care must be taken not to remove too much eyelid tissue and sometimes the ophthalmologist may choose to do 2 procedures to make sure they remove the just right amount of eyelid tissue.



Skin-muscle resection for correction of entropion.

What is the prognosis?

Surgical correction is usually successful with entropion although the surgeon may elect to perform 2 surgeries to reduce the chance of removing too much tissue. Medical management is subsequently life-long as flare ups of conjunctivitis can recur. Lubrication of the eyes is vital. As long as the diagnosis of entropion is made early and the cornea has not sustained any damage, the prognosis is good for surgical correction.

Should the affected dog be bred?

Due to the concern this both ectropion and entropion are inherited, dogs with these conditions, particularly if severe, should not be bred.