

# Entropion

## What is Entropion?

Entropion usually happens to the dog's lower eyelid; all or part of the eyelid folds inward toward the eyeball. However, it can also affect the upper lid and in some cases, both upper and lower eyelids are affected. The disorder can be present in one or both eyes. The constant rubbing of the dog's eyelashes against his eye results in irritation and great discomfort. Eventually, entropion in dogs can cause painful corneal ulcers (open sores), which can lead to scarring, loss of vision, or even blindness. Entropion usually occurs to breeds which have flat faces, short muzzles and loose facial skin folds. Entropion in dogs is an abnormality in which the eyelid inverts (rolls) inward. This causes the dog's eyelashes to repeatedly scrape across the eyeball.



**Entropion of the lower eyelid in a dog with a corneal ulcer**

## Symptoms of Entropion in Dogs Symptoms may include:

- Eye redness
- Inner eye inflammation
- Sensitivity to light
- Squinting
- Excessive tearing
- Dog paws at his eyes
- Eye discharge or mucus
- Keeping eyes closed
- Corneal abrasion
- Corneal ulcers (appear as dull spots or disc-like depressions on the surface of the eye)
- Cries out, yelps from the pain
- Depression
- Lethargy

## Causes of Entropion in Dogs

- Entropion is usually inherited, puppies are born with the abnormality
- Trauma to the eye
- Inflamed eye infection
- Senior dogs with skin laxity due to aging

## Diagnosis of Entropion in Dogs

The veterinarian will want to know if your dog has had any recent trauma to the eye and may administer local anesthetic eye drops before performing an eye exam. This will help with the pain and your dog will be less stressed. Entropion in dogs is easily diagnosed during the optical exam. If the veterinarian is concerned that your dog has corneal abrasions or corneal ulcers he will perform a fluorescein test. A drop of fluorescein is placed on the cornea; the dye turns green and will adhere to any damage on the cornea. The veterinarian may also recommend a Schirmer tear test, which measures aqueous tear production. Patients diagnosed with corneal abrasions will be prescribed antibiotic drops and ophthalmic atropine drops or ointment, which will help with the pain and spasms. If the corneal ulcer does not heal properly, surgery may be required to remove unhealthy corneal tissue or to have a corneal graft.

## Treatment of Entropion in Dogs

Eyelid surgery is the only permanent treatment for entropion. An ophthalmologist veterinary surgeon will remove a small piece of tissue directly from below the eyelid (if entropion is on lower eyelid) and the two sides of the remaining tissue will be pulled together and sutured. The patient will have to have general anesthesia for this surgical procedure. Puppies born with severe entropion may be treated first using a procedure to roll the eyelids outwards (keeping the eyelid from curling in with the use of sutures). The surgery to correct the problem is then performed when he is more mature (6-12 months of age). In some cases when this is done, puppies eyes have corrected themselves before the surgery is needed.



**Post-operative picture of a dog with entropion of the lower eyelid.**

## Recovery of Entropion in Dogs

Patients that undergo surgery for entropion will receive post-operative instructions from the ophthalmologist veterinary surgeon. The patient will need to be confined indoor with occasional supervised potty breaks. He will need to wear an Elizabethan collar until the sutures are removed. The eye will be very sensitive to light; so bright lights should be avoided. Your dog will be prescribed pain relief and anti-inflammatory medications. To help prevent infections he may also be prescribed antibiotics.

Your companion will require follow up visits to monitor his progress and to have the sutures removed. Patients being treated for corneal abrasions or corneal ulcers will need to be seen weekly for eye exams, to ensure that the cornea is healing properly.

Dogs that undergo corrective surgery for entropion have an excellent prognosis. They are able to enjoy an improved quality of life without the constant pain and irritation to their eye. The success rate for entropion surgery is 90-95%. A few dogs may need a second surgery to correct the abnormality. Reoccurrence of the disorder is uncommon.