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Entropion

What is Entropion?

Entropion is the inversion or inward rolling of the margin of the eyelid(s). It can involve the upper or lower lids or both. As the lid rolls inward, the skin and hair touch the surface of the eye and irritate it. Severe cases can cause corneal ulcers, which may become serious and result in vision loss.

What causes Entropion?

Entropion can be a developmental defect and occur shortly after birth or during the first years of life as the animal grows. Entropion may be an inherited defect in certain breeds of dogs, and it is frequently recognized in Chow chows, English bulldogs, Shar Peis, mastiffs and retrievers.

Another type of Entropion occurs in prominent eyed dogs, such as Pugs and Pekingese. It is associated with an inward rolling of the inner corners of the eyelids and is called **Medial Canthal Entropion**. Over time, it can lead to corneal pigment, ulcers, and vision loss.

Older dogs and cats sometimes develop Entropion associated with loss of orbital fat and decreased eyelid muscle tone. Entropion can also occur secondary to ocular irritation and chronic squinting, or injury to the eyelids. Chronic ocular irritation is the most common cause of eyelid abnormalities in cats.

What are the common clinical signs?

Squinting, tearing, and pawing at the eye(s) are the most common clinical signs. Both eyes are usually affected, though one eye is often more affected than the other. Occasionally, clinical signs suddenly worsen if a corneal ulcer develops.

What is the treatment?

In very young puppies, temporary eyelid eversion, called **Eyelid Tacking**, is used to roll the eyelids outward. Sutures stay in place for 1-3 weeks. If Entropion recurs, repeat tacking procedures or permanent correction is needed.

Various surgical techniques are available for the correction of Entropion. A particular technique will be recommended according to the type and severity of Entropion affecting the patient. Postoperative care is minimal, and healing is rapid, though medications are needed for a few weeks. An Elizabethan collar may be needed for 1-2 weeks postoperatively to prevent self-inflicted trauma. Patients with a chronic underlying ocular irritation may require medications long term to prevent recurrent problems.
