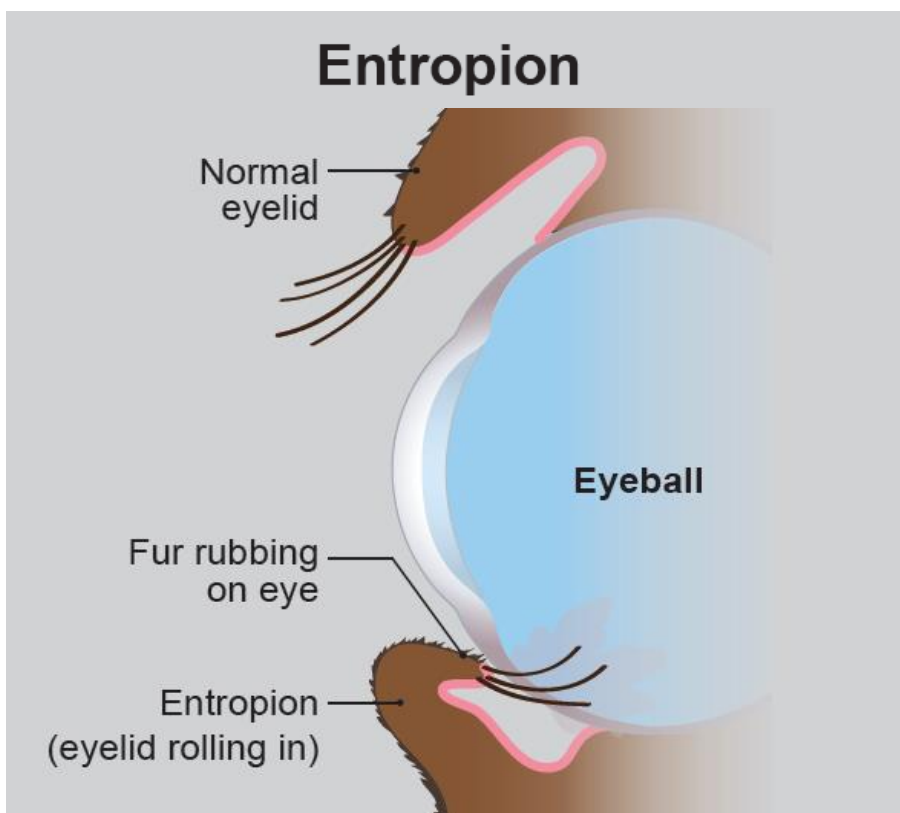


Entropion in dogs

Overview

- Entropion is when an eyelid rolls in towards the eyeball, causing fur and eyelashes to rub the surface of the eye.
- Entropion is very painful and often leads to problems such as conjunctivitis, infections and ulcers.
- Left untreated, entropion can cause blindness or even loss of an eye.
- Entropion is most common in dogs with excess skin/skin folds and dogs with short noses.
- Treatment for entropion usually involves an operation and fortunately a successful surgery is likely to cure the problem.



What is entropion?

Entropion is when an eyelid rolls in towards the eyeball, causing fur and eyelashes damage the surface of the eye. Entropion is very painful and often causes conjunctivitis, eye infections and eye ulcers. Entropion often affects both eyes. Left untreated, entropion can cause severe pain, scarring and even loss of an eye.

Pedigree dogs often inherit entropion from a parent but it's can also be caused by face shape, age and chronic skin problems (more details below).



This dog has a weepy eye because of lower eyelid entropion – image thanks to Eye Veterinary Clinic.

Symptoms

- Weepy eye
- Closing eye
- Red eye
- Rubbing face

- Recurring conjunctivitis
- Recurring eye infections
- Recurring eye ulcers

When to contact your vet

Contact your vet for an appointment as soon as you notice anything wrong with your dog's eye(s). Don't wait to see if the problem gets better - eye problems often get worse quickly and eyes are too precious to leave to chance.

You know your dog best. If they don't have the symptoms listed here but you are still concerned, it's always best to contact your vet.

Causes

Entropion can develop because of:

Face shape / breed

- Breeds at risk of entropion include those with lots of skin around their eyes such as the Shar Pei, Chow Chow and St Bernard, and flat-faced breeds such as the Bulldog and Pug.

Pain

- A painful eye often causes the eyeball to sink into its socket, which can cause entropion.

Age

- Just like us, dogs develop saggy skin with age. Saggy eyelids are likely to roll inwards. Age related entropion is very common in Cocker Spaniels.

Weight loss

- Occasionally, weight loss can lead to saggy skin and entropion.

Injury / long-term skin problems

- Eyelid injuries, eyelid surgery and skin problems that affect the eyelids can all cause entropion.

Treatment

Surgery

Correcting entropion nearly always requires an operation. The surgery aims to tighten the eyelid and stop it rolling inwards. The exact surgery your dog needs depends on how severe their entropion is. It's possible your dog may need more than one operation to cure the problem.

Puppies with entropion

If your puppy has entropion, your vet is likely to suggest waiting until they are between 5-12 months old before correcting it. This is because it may improve as they grow. Your vet may suggest a temporary procedure to hold your puppy's eyelids in a more natural position and protect their eyes while they grow. Left untreated, entropion can cause blindness.

Eye drops

It's likely your vet will prescribe eye drops to lubricate your dog's eye(s), reduce inflammation and treat any infections. If you have more than one eye drop to apply, you may find our medicine planner useful.

Watch our video: 'How to: apply eye drops for your dog'.

Ongoing care and outlook

After surgery, your dog will need to wear a head cone (buster collar) to stop them rubbing and scratching their eye(s) - you will need to make sure they keep it on 24/7, until your vet says otherwise. Some dogs need more than one operation to correct the problem, but once they have recovered successfully, it's likely that they will be pain free and unlikely to suffer from entropion again.

Prevention

We shouldn't breed from dogs who have suffered with entropion because it's likely to be passed onto their puppies.

If your dog develops any skin problems, have them treated quickly so it doesn't lead to problems such as entropion.

Published: May 2019