



ENTROPION

What is ENTROPION?

Entropion is a condition in which the eyelid rolls in, allowing the hairs on the eyelid to contact the surface of the eye. This causes discomfort, and can result in scarring of the cornea (the normally clear front window to the eye) or corneal ulceration (an abrasion on the cornea).

Causes

Entropion can occur for many reasons. For some dogs, it is a temporary problem that occurs because there is some other painful eye condition. This is called spastic entropion. When dogs experience eye pain, the eye often “sinks” back into the socket, allowing the eyelid to roll in. Once the underlying eye condition is treated, the eye should return to its normal position within the socket, resulting in resolution of the entropion.

Entropion can also occur because the eyelids themselves are abnormal. This is called anatomic entropion. For example, the eyelids can be excessively long, allowing the lids to roll in. Another common cause of anatomic entropion in dogs is the presence of excessive, drooping skin or skin folds around the eyes. Puppies can also develop entropion while they “grow” into their skin.

Treatment

For entropion that is secondary, or spastic, the most important treatment is to identify and address the underlying cause of the eye pain. In addition, sutures can be placed to temporarily roll out the eyelids until the underlying cause resolves to reduce the discomfort that is caused by the entropion. Alternatively, a soft contact lens can be placed on the eye to act like a bandage, shielding the cornea from the hairs of the in-rolled lids.

For puppies with entropion, it is important in most cases not to perform surgery to permanently correct the entropion until they are fully grown. If surgery is performed while a dog is still growing, the entropion may be over-corrected, causing the eyelids to roll out once the dog has reached his or her adult size. For this reason, sutures are often placed to temporarily roll out the eyelids as needed until their adult conformation has been reached, and then corrective surgery can be performed if needed.

For anatomic entropion, surgery is often needed to permanently correct the entropion. There are many different surgical techniques, and we will discuss with you the best option for your pet. For mild cases of entropion, it is sometimes possible to avoid surgery by frequently applying a lubricating ophthalmic ointment to the eye to reduce the irritation from the entropion.

Post-operative Care

Following surgery, most dogs will go home the same day. An antibiotic eye ointment will be prescribed for the first couple weeks after surgery, and often an oral anti-inflammatory medication is also prescribed to reduce swelling and discomfort. Your pet should have restricted activity and should wear an E-collar after surgery as directed (typically for 10-14 days). The skin sutures will be removed about two weeks after surgery, and then your pet may resume normal activity.

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