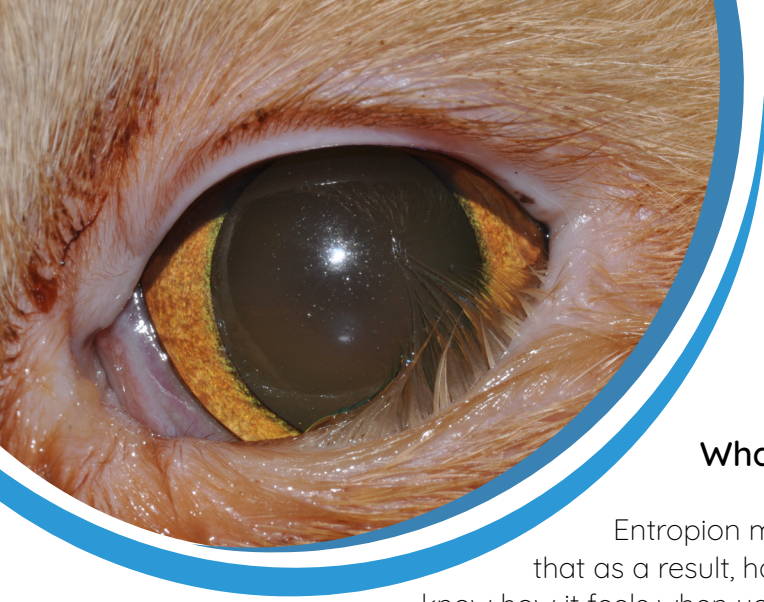


Entropion in the cat



What is entropion?

Entropion means that your cat's eyelid margin has 'flipped' over and that as a result, hair is now rubbing on the surface of the eye (cornea). If you know how it feels when you have just one eyelash in your eye, then you can imagine how your cat must feel with not just one but many hairs rubbing on the eye! Entropion can be very painful and if left untreated, it is likely to result in wounds on the eye, scarring of the cornea and loss of sight. We therefore usually advise urgent correction of entropion.



An in-turned eyelid (entropion) before and after the lid has been pulled out to a correct position. The objective of surgery is to make sure that the eyelid remains permanently turned out.

Why has my cat developed entropion?

The most common causes for entropion are:

- After a severe episode of 'cat-flu'
- Breed related – poor eyelid conformation such as in Persian cats
- As a result of a previous injury, that has left the eyelids scarred
- Age related – with age, the eyes tend to "sink in" slightly, causing a secondary rolling in of the eyelids

How is entropion treated?

We usually recommend surgical correction under general anaesthesia. The affected eyelid is clipped and aseptically prepared. The surgeon can then cut out the required amount of eyelid skin to create a lid that fits well to the eyeball. Entropion surgery is carried out with loupes or the operating microscope to cause as little scarring as possible. The sutures used to reconstruct the surgical wounds are extremely fine and dissolve on their own accord, so removal should not be necessary.

What are the risks of surgical treatment for entropion?

- General anaesthesia risks
- Under-correction – If the surgeon removes too little of the eyelid skin, then entropion can recur after the operation
- Over-correction - If too much eyelid skin is removed, then the eye will be turned out too much after the operation
- The surgical wound might not heal (break down) and repeat suturing might be required
- The sutures could rub on the eye and cause irritation

The surgeon will decide how much eyelid skin is removed for the ideal correction in each individual patient. The more experience your surgeon has, the greater the chance that the entropion will be corrected with a single operation. However, entropion surgery is an art and not a science and there is always the possibility that your pet may require a 2nd surgery. For straightforward entropion operations, we can say that we have a success rate of over 90%. In rare and often complex cases, multiple operations are required to treat eyes with severe entropion and a charge will be made for each of these.

What is the aftercare following entropion surgery?

- Your cat will need to wear a collar and should be kept indoors for about 10 days
- Antibiotic drops or ointment will need to be applied to the eye
- Some medication such as painkillers will need to be given by mouth

Most patients are pain-free right after the operation and will feel a lot better right away.



Above the eye of a young cat with severe and chronic entropion. Note how the rubbing of the in-turned eyelid hair has caused the cornea to become opaque.



The same eye three weeks after surgery. Some of the absorbable sutures are still present in the lower lid but will drop out soon. Note how quickly the cornea has cleared once the irritating hair was removed.

