

Lower Lid Entropion

What is an entropion?

Entropion is the medical term used to describe the lower eyelid turning inwards. This may result in the eyelashes touching the front of the eye. One or both eyelids may be affected at the same time.

What are the symptoms of entropion?

The symptoms include discomfort, irritation, watering and redness of the eye

What are the causes of entropion?

The commonest cause of entropion is laxity of the eyelid tissues due to ageing. Other causes include trauma, scarring or previous surgery.

Can entropion affect the eye, or eyesight?

Entropion can cause the eyelashes to rub on the front of the eye which may cause an abrasion or an eye infection which rarely could result in permanently damaged vision.

Treatment

The type of treatment offered will depend on what caused the condition.

Injections of Botulinum toxin ('Botox') may be given into the lower eyelid. This relaxes the muscles around the eye and may allow the eyelid to turn outwards. This is only a temporary effect, typically lasting 2-4 months. Injections can be repeated on a regular basis if desired.

The commonest treatment for entropion is with an operation to tighten the lower lid which is often combined with tightening the muscle responsible for stabilising the lid. This will then allow the lid to turn outwards and sit in a more normal position.

Unless instructed otherwise you are allowed to eat and drink before your surgery. You can also take your tablet medication as normal, although in some situations your surgeon may ask you to stop some blood thinning medications such as Aspirin, Clopidogrel, Warfarin or Apixaban.

Entropion surgery is a day case procedure and patients normally stay awake for the operation. The skin is numbed with a local anaesthetic injection at the start of the operation. The procedure itself usually takes about 30 minutes per eyelid.

Following surgery, the eye may be padded for a while to reduce swelling, and antibiotic ointment may be prescribed for a few weeks. A friend or relative should be available to take you home as you must not drive immediately following the operation. A review in clinic is organised to check on the position of the eyelid and sometimes stitches may need to be removed.

While waiting for surgery the lid can be taped to the cheek to keep it rolled out and stop it rubbing on the eye. Lubricating eye drops can also be used to make the eye more comfortable.

What are the risks of entropion surgery?

Minor swelling and bruising can be expected and may last for up to 2-3 weeks. Other risks include bleeding and infection but these are uncommon. You may develop a small scar at the site of surgery although normally it heals very well. Entropion may recur over time, which may require further procedures in future. Damage to the eyeball, nerves and surrounding structures can occur, although this is very rare.

Will the operation be painful?

There will be some discomfort after the operation but this can normally be managed with painkillers and usually subsides within 24-48 hours.

When can I resume my normal activities?

Patients are advised to rest for a day or so before resuming their usual activities, including returning to work when they feel ready. Swimming however should be avoided for 2 to 3 weeks after surgery. You may gently clean the eyelids with cooled boiled water. You can clean the rest of your face normally.

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