

Entropion

What is Entropion?

This is a condition that commonly affects the lower eyelid, causing it to turn inwards, resulting in the eyelashes rubbing on the front of the eye. This causes discomfort, redness and sometimes a sticky eye. If left, it can lead to corneal ulcers.

Treatment

This involves a minor operation to turn the lid outwards again to its normal position. As a temporary measure, while you are waiting for your operation, tape can be used to keep your eyelid turned outwards.

Method for placing tape to treat Entropion

- First wash your hands.
- Using a piece of wide Sellotape, approximately 3 cms long, apply one end to the skin of the lower lid, just underneath the eyelashes.
- Secure the other end of the tape to the cheek. The tension will pull the eyelid outwards back into its normal position.
- Do not use too much tension - if the lid is pulled too far outwards, it will result in a watery eye. Use the position of the eyelid in the other eye to judge how much tension to use. Change the tape as often as you need to, i.e. when it loses its tension and the lid starts to turn inwards again.

Entropion in Detail

Entropion is the medical term used to describe rolling inward of the lower eyelid and eyelashes towards the eye. The skin of the eyelid and the eyelashes rub against the cornea (the front part of the eye) and conjunctiva (the mucous membrane that protects the eye). This rubbing can lead to excessive tearing, crusting of the eyelid, mucous discharge, a feeling that something is in the eye, irritation of the cornea, and impaired vision.

Most cases of entropion are due to relaxation of the tissues of the eyelid because of ageing. Some cases result from scarring of the inner surface of the eyelid caused by chemical and thermal burns, inflammatory diseases such as ocular pemphigoid, or allergic reactions. Rarely entropion can be present at birth if the eyelids do not form properly.

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Entropion should be repaired surgically before the rubbing damages the cornea by causing infection and scarring. Prior to surgery, taping the lower lid down and using lubricating drops and ointment can protect the eye. In some cases, sutures can be placed through the lower eyelid until more definitive surgery can be performed.

The surgery to repair entropion is usually performed under local anaesthesia as an outpatient. In most cases, your doctor will tighten the eyelid and its attachments. You may have a patch overnight and then will commonly use an antibiotic ointment for about a week. After your eyelids heal, your eye will feel comfortable and you will no longer have the risk of corneal scarring, infection, and loss of vision.

Factsheet

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