

ENTROPION

What is entropion?

Entropion is when the eyelid rolls inwards. This allows skin hairs to touch the surface of the eye and cause discomfort and irritation.

Entropion can affect the lower eyelid, the upper eyelid, or both, and can affect one or both eyes.

To the right you can see entropion in the left lower eyelid of a young Weimaraner. See photos below for his post-operative progress.



Which animals are at risk?

Any animal can develop entropion at any time, but the most common instances are outlined below:

- Entropion is more common in dogs than cats.
- In dogs, entropion is most common in young dogs, typically less than three years. It is more common in certain breeds, but can also occur in cross-breed dogs.
- In cats, entropion can occur at any age but the most common stages are young cats less than three years, and in older cats, often because of loss of weight or condition. Pure-breed cats are predisposed to entropion, especially when young.

What causes entropion?

This is a tricky question because there are several different types of entropion and several different causes. The most common reason is that the eyelids do not 'fit' the eye properly. This is usually related to the breed. The eyelids should sit against the eye snugly. If the eyelids are too long, or there is excessive loose skin on the head/around the eyes, the fit is poor and the eyelids may roll in.

What signs will I notice?

Signs of entropion include squinting and blinking (the eyelid opening looks smaller), a watery or sticky discharge from the eye, conjunctivitis (pink or red eye) and rubbing. In moderate to severe cases, the hairs will cause a corneal ulcer on the surface of the eye itself – this causes more pain so the signs of discomfort are more obvious.



ENTROPION

What are the treatment options?

In the vast majority of cases, eyelid surgery is needed but temporary options are sometimes suitable.

TEMPORARY TACKING STITCHES

Temporary tacking stitches can be placed to evert the eyelids to reduce discomfort. The stitches can be left in place for several weeks, and can be repeated. This is a temporary option and is good for young puppies, to allow time for the puppy to 'grow into their skin'. Some puppies will still need actual surgery, some will not. Temporary tacking stitches are also good if there are signs of skin infection, which requires treatment before definitive surgery.

ENTROPION SURGERY

There are several different entropion surgery techniques and the ophthalmologist will decide what is best for your pet. Most techniques involve the removal of eyelid skin to evert and/or shorten the eyelid, to make the eyelid 'fit the eye' better.

When is the best time for entropion surgery?

The simple answer is as soon as possible. Entropion causes pain, and so it is best to alleviate the pain as soon as possible. If the entropion is very mild, and the eye is comfortable, it is an option to monitor and wait. People often ask, understandably, if it would be better to wait for their pet to get older and more mature. It is true that the shape of the head and the eyelids will change as the animal matures, especially in large-breed males. But, maturation can take too long when the eyes are painful. As mentioned above, temporary options are possible for young puppies or if there is a skin infection that needs treatment.

What is the success rate? Will my pet need surgery again?

The success rate is 85-90% in routine cases.

Animals who have already had entropion surgery have a higher risk of complications. Certain breeds are more predisposed to problems, including the need for further surgery. Examples include the SharPei and ChowChow. We always err on the side of caution – it is better to remove too little skin and repeat the surgery, rather than to remove too much skin.

What complications can occur?

Suture complications, reaction to the suture material, corneal ulcer, infection, persisting entropion, need for further surgery, ectropion (the opposite of entropion, when the eyelid turns out too far).



ENTROPION

What will my pet need?

BEFORE THE SURGERY

Your pet will need to be assessed by the ophthalmologist to see if surgery is an option. This is the Initial Referral Consultation. It is a one-hour appointment for a detailed assessment of your dog's eyes, and a detailed discussion.

AROUND THE SURGERY

Your pet will need a general anaesthetic and to stay in the hospital for the day or overnight. The length of the general anaesthetic varies depending on surgery being done on one or two eyes. Routine operating days are Mondays and Wednesdays. Your pet will be admitted the afternoon before or at around 8am on the day of surgery, depending on our schedule that week.

DO I NEED TO BRING ANYTHING FOR THE SURGERY?

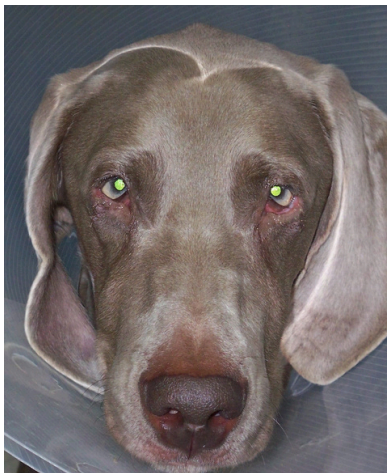
We provide everything but you are welcome to bring a bed, favourite toy and any special food. Please bring all medication.

AFTER THE SURGERY

Your pet will need:

- rest for 5-7 days – this means shorter walks and no toys
- to wear a protective collar to stop eye rubbing for 10 to 14 days
- medications by mouth, once or twice daily (painkillers, anti-inflammatory drugs and sometimes antibiotics)
- eye drops or cream is sometimes prescribed
- follow-ups – see below

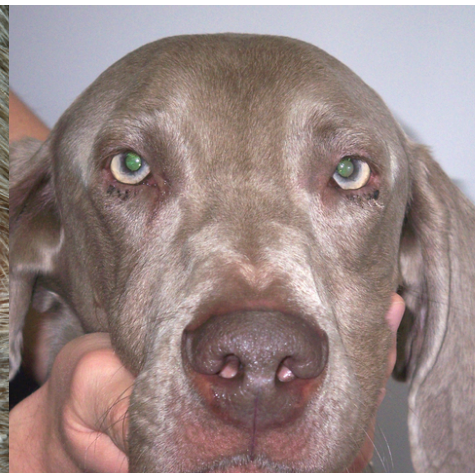
Most of the healing occurs in the first two weeks.



24 hours after surgery



2 weeks after surgery



2 weeks after surgery

ENTROPION

Is the surgery painful?

No, most eyes should be comfortable after the surgery. The eye may have a mild sticky discharge for several days.

Do any stitches need to be removed?

No. The stitches used in the surgery will dissolve over several weeks. In some animals, the stitches are removed early – either conscious or under sedation, but this is not routine.

Follow-ups

Most patients have one follow-up 10 to 14 days after the surgery. Some patients need a second follow-up. Most patients have the check-up at The Ralph, but sometimes the local referring vet can do the check-up.

What are the fees involved?

The ophthalmologist will discuss the fees with you at the time of the consultation, and can email you a detailed estimate. In general, the fees can be divided into three parts: the initial consultation, the surgery, and follow-up appointments (post-operative check-ups).

I want to go ahead – what do I need to do?

Please tell the ophthalmologist at The Ralph that you wish to proceed and a date for surgery will be arranged.

The ophthalmologist will send your vet a detailed report after the initial consultation so that they are 'in the loop'.

