

COMMON EYELID CONDITIONS

CONJUNCTIVITIS (Inflammation of the inner lining of the eyelids) is often the result of physical abnormalities of the eyelids. These causes often are hereditary or congenital, but sometimes do not appear until later in life. The inflammation most commonly is a result of physical trauma to the eye as a result of the condition, either directly or indirectly. When not properly corrected, the problem continues to recur--possibly leading to blindness.

DISTICHIASIS is the term for a condition in which an extra row of eyelashes is present along the inner edge of the eyelid. These extra eyelashes rub against the eye causing serious discomfort, inflammation, and infection. One of several surgical techniques is required to remove this extra row of eyelashes.

TRICHIASIS is a condition where there are some of the normal row of eyelashes that grow inward toward the eye instead of out in the proper direction. These eyelashes also strike the eye causing pain, inflammation, and infection. Surgical removal of these eyelashes is required to solve the problem.

ECTROPION is an abnormality where the eyelid is rolled outward, often forming a small "pouch" in the eyelid instead of being tight and straight across the eye. This increases the eye's exposure to foreign material, such as dust and dirt. Obviously this can easily cause trauma and damage to the eye. Surgery is required to remove this "pouch."

ENTROPION is the term used when the eyelid is rolled inward toward the eye allowing the eyelashes to rub against the eye. This condition can be very painful causing the pet to scratch and rub the eye--often causing further damage. This condition results in discomfort, irritation, inflammation, infection, and possibly loss of vision. It is corrected with surgery by properly aligning the eyelid so that it does not roll inward toward the eye.

KERATOCONJUNCTIVITIS SICCA is commonly called "dry eye." The condition occurs when there is insufficient tear production to maintain proper eye lubrication. Without proper lubrication, the outer layers of the eye will "dry out" causing deterioration of these outer layers leading to blindness. The eye often has an accumulation of thick mucous along the eyelid margin. Medical therapy is usually initiated at first to restore tear production. When this fails, surgery is sometimes performed to reroute salivary ducts providing fluid lubrication of the eye.