

Entropion surgery for in-turned lower eyelid

What is entropion?

An entropion is an abnormal inward turning of the margin of the eyelid (where the eyelashes are). This can result in rubbing of the eyelashes onto the conjunctiva (white part of eye) and cornea (clear window of the eye in front of the iris). It most commonly affects the LOWER eyelid, but can occasionally affect the upper eyelid.

In most cases, an entropion is seen in the older adult, and is due to aging of the tissues of the eyelid that support and hold it in place. These supporting structures include the tendons at the inner and outer corner of the eyelids and the internal muscles of the eyelid. Stretching or detachment of these supporting structures results in the eyelid turning inward (entropion).

Less commonly, an entropion may develop from scarring of the inner surface of the eyelid from previous trauma, infection or inflammation in the eye.

What problems can entropion cause?

An entropion usually causes one or more of the following symptoms:

- Irritated painful eye (foreign-body, gritty sensation)
- Watery eye
- Red eye or reddened eyelid margin
- Excess mucous discharge from the eye

These symptoms usually result from the rubbing of the inward turning eyelashes onto the surface of the eye.

In many cases, it will continue to worsen and may cause complications of the eye itself. In particular, traumatic rubbing of the cornea by the eyelashes can result in sight-threatening infections or scarring of the eye.

How is entropion treated?

Dr Then will diagnose the presence and cause of your entropion with a thorough examination of your eyelids and eyes.

An entropion will not spontaneously correct itself and is best managed with surgery.

In situations where surgery is not possible (for example, if the patient is not medically fit for surgery) or not desired by the patient, there are some non-surgical treatment methods. These include the use of cautery or radiofrequency to reposition the eyelid. However, these measures are often temporary, and the recurrence rate of entropion is higher than after surgery.

What are the benefits of entropion surgery?

The aim of surgery is to restore the normal position of the eyelid margin so that the eyelashes no longer rub the eye, resulting in a comfortable and safe eye. This can be performed as a day case and under local anaesthetic.

How is entropion surgery performed?

Entropion surgery usually involves tightening and reattachment of the supporting tendons and muscles via incisions made in the outer corner and internal aspect of the eyelid. If the entropion is due to internal scarring of the eyelid, then grafts of the mucous membrane may be required.

What should I expect after my surgery?

After surgery, all patients will have some bruising and swelling of the lower eyelids which may extend into the cheek or lower face and neck. This usually recovers over a few weeks after surgery.

The eyelid often feels and looks tight. It can take up to 6 weeks to soften and settle into its final position as healing progresses. The eye may feel gritty, irritated or watery in this period also, but also usually settles with time. These symptoms can be relieved by using regular artificial tears.

There may be tenderness and lumpiness in the outer corner of the eyelid. This is due to scar tissue forming over the internal sutures used to tighten the outer eyelid, and usually settles within the first 3 months.

Dr Then will review the eyelid one week after surgery, and then again after 3 months, to ensure that the patients has achieved a good result and is comfortable.

What are the risks of entropion surgery?

This surgery is confined to the eyelid tissues, and does not involve the eye itself. Therefore there is no risk of visual loss with this surgery.

The risks of surgery include (but are not limited to):

- Over-correction or under-correction
- Asymmetry of eyelid position
- Infection
- Suture granuloma over the scar tissue at the outer corner of the eyelid
- Recurrence of entropion and need for further surgery

These risks are uncommon and can be successfully treated if they occur.

Patient acceptance of risk

It is impossible for Dr Then to inform of every possible complication that may occur. Results cannot be guaranteed and more treatment/surgery may be necessary.

We confirm you have signed a consent form with Dr Then to proceed with this procedure.

Dr Then has answered any questions to your satisfaction and costs of having lower lid entropion surgery performed have been explained.

If you have any additional queries, please do not hesitate to call 9535 4321.