

DISTICHIASIS AND ECTOPIC CILIA



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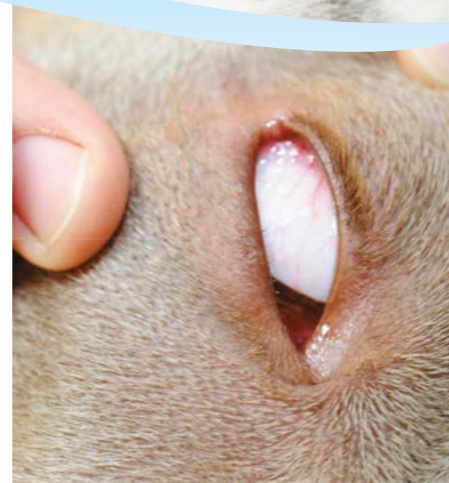


Distichia are extra eyelashes, which appear along the eyelid margin. These usually erupt within the first few years of life and can grow on either lid and one or both eyes. They are mainly seen in dogs, and some breeds are more frequently affected.

These extra hairs can irritate the eye and in some cases cause problems like conjunctivitis and excessive tearing. In such instances removal of these extra hairs may be necessary.

Distichia are most frequently removed by electrolysis. This requires a general anaesthetic as a fine needle has to be inserted into each individual hair follicle. A repeat procedure is sometimes necessary as hairs have cyclical growth pattern and may not all be apparent at the initial surgery.

Ectopic cilia are hairs that emerge from the conjunctiva under the eyelid. They are not always visible in conscious dogs, especially wriggly ones! These are usually more painful than distichia as they contact the cornea (surface of the eye) and may cause an ulcer. They can also cause problems such as conjunctivitis and watery eyes. These lashes require surgical removal under general anaesthetic, which is usually curative.



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