



# Ectropion

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**This leaflet is for patients with ectropion and explains the treatment, including risks and benefits.**

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## What is ectropion?

Ectropion is the medical term used to describe sagging and outward turning of the lower eyelid and eyelashes. This can lead to excessive tearing, crusting of the eyelid, mucous discharge and irritation of the eye.

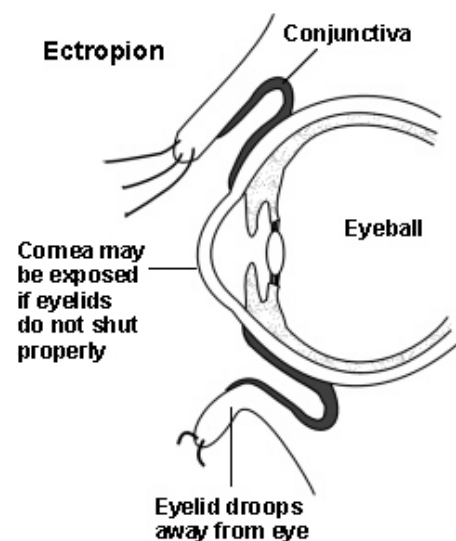
## What causes ectropion?

Most cases of ectropion are due to weakening of the tissues and small muscles of the eyelid, as a result of ageing. Some cases result from scarring of the eyelid caused by chemical and thermal burns, trauma, skin cancers, or previous eyelid surgery.

## How is ectropion treated?

Ectropion should be repaired surgically before there is any damage to the cornea (the front of the eye). The eyes may not close properly if you have an ectropion, so the cornea is not fully protected and may get damaged. A corneal ulcer may develop. The cornea is vital for vision and a damaged cornea may affect your eyesight. Prior to surgery, the eye can be protected by using lubricating drops and ointment.

The surgery to repair ectropion 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 usually use an antibiotic eye drop or ointment for about two weeks. 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.



## Are there any risks or side effects of the operation?

- There may be bruising around the eye.
- There is a small risk of infection of the lid or eye.
- There is a possibility of recurrence or over correction of the eyelid, which may require a further operation.
- You may have an allergic reaction to the local anaesthetic injection or the antibiotic drops / ointment.

**If you have any concerns or questions, please speak to your consultant.**

## What are the benefits?

- Relief of symptoms.
- Reduction of risk of eye infection.
- Restoration of the normal appearance of the eyelid.

## Contacting us

If you have a minor eye problem, please seek advice from your GP, optician or pharmacist. If urgent, please attend Eye Casualty or call 111.

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| Eye Casualty (Reading):                          | Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5pm; Sat & Sun & bank holidays 9am-12.30pm; Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day. |
| Eye Casualty: Prince Charles Eye Unit (Windsor): | Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5pm; Sat 8.30am-12.30pm; Closed Sun & bank holidays.                                 |
| Dorrell Ward (Reading):                          | 0118 322 7172  |
| Eye Day Unit (Reading):                          | (24 hours a day)   |

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**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

RBFT Ophthalmology, June 2025

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