

Treatment for Ectropion

Information for patients



Oxford Eye Hospital

What is ectropion?

This is a condition that commonly affects the lower eyelid, causing it to droop and turn outwards. It affects both eyes and causes them to water constantly.

What are the symptoms of an ectropion?

- Tear ducts drain tears away from the surface of the eye to the back of the nose. When the eyelid turns outwards, the tears can't drain away properly, causing the eyes to become watery.
- The exposed inner eyelid may also become dry and sore.
- May cause an infection and damage to the cornea, which can lead to problems with vision.

What causes ectropion?

- Older people are most commonly affected by ectropion because the muscles of the eyelid have become less elastic and weak with age.
- Damage to the skin near the eyes or the eyelids themselves.
- Facial palsy – when the facial muscles become paralysed or weak. This is usually a temporary condition.

What is the treatment for an ectropion?

The usual treatment is a minor operation to turn the lid inwards again to its normal position. The operation is carried out as a day case procedure under local anaesthetic. The surgeon may use stitches to close the wound.

The eye will normally be padded after the operation to prevent bruising and swelling. Once the pad is removed, usually the next day, you should take care to keep your eyelid clean and free from infection. Wash the eye with cooled, boiled water only until the stitches are removed. We may ask you to use antibiotic eye ointment on the wound where the stitches are, for 7-10 days after the procedure.

Risks and side effects

You may still experience some bruising around the operated eye despite the eye being padded. This may be apparent for 7-10 days.

Other risks are:

- Infection
- Over-correction of the ectropion (extremely rare)

The surgeon will explain the risks to you in more detail before asking you to sign the consent form.

You may have stitches after this procedure. These may be removed after 7, 10 or 14 days – depending on the type of stitches used. Before you leave the department you will be given an appointment to return to Outpatients for the stitches to be removed.

While you are waiting for your operation:

If appropriate, we will give you a lubricating ointment which you may use to help keep your eyes more comfortable while you are waiting for your operation.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact

Eye Outpatients:

Telephone: **01865 234567** and choose the appropriate option for your query.

Further information

If you would like further information please look at the following website:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/ectropion/

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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August 2026
Review: August 2029
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
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