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Mike has more than 35 years of experience in companion animal veterinary practice and is a valued member of IDEXX's Pet Health Network team since 2013.

Ectropion is a common condition of [dogs](#) where the lower eyelids droop or roll out. It can affect one or both eyes. It is often inherited and has a strong tendency to occur in dogs with loose droopy skin. [St. Bernards](#), [Great Danes](#), [Bloodhounds](#), [Bullmastiffs](#), [Newfoundlands](#), among others, are predisposed to ectropion¹. Hereditary or developmental ectropion is most common in young dogs whereas acquired ectropion can develop as a result of nerve damage or injury and can occur with corneal injury, infection or other severe [inflammatory](#) conditions.

In certain breeds it is so common it's considered practically normal.

Symptoms of ectropion

Affected dogs have:

- Droopy lower eyelids
- [Redness](#) and inflammation of the conjunctiva
- Excessive [tearing](#)

Eye infections can result from the exposure of the lower conjunctiva.

Diagnosis of ectropion

In most cases the condition can be confirmed by visual examination. [A thorough examination](#) of the eyelids is important since ectropion can often occur in conjunction with entropion ([Click here to learn about entropion.](#)) which makes the condition more complicated to manage.

Treatment of ectropion

Ectropion is relatively well tolerated unless it is severe and surgical repair can generally be avoided by treating inflammation with a variety of eye drops. Most cases of ectropion that are not severe will require little if any intervention other than topical drops and ointments. Extremely severe cases of ectropion will not improve without [surgical](#) repair. There are several surgical procedures that may be used to reduce

ectropion.

Prevention of ectropion

Because of the hereditary aspect of ectropion, affected dogs will likely transmit the defect. Affected dogs should probably not be bred.

Acquired cases are generally associated with traumatic injury. The best way to avoid that is to keep your dog on a leash at all times. [Click here to learn why you may be using the wrong leash.](#)

Prognosis of ectropion

In all but the most severely affected cases the prognosis is quite good. The condition is generally well tolerated and in most cases will respond to simple medical care. Surgical correction may be required in severe cases. Though the surgery is relatively simple it can be very delicate and requires an experienced surgeon.

Questions to ask your veterinarian

- My puppy's eyes water a lot and he tends to squint. Should I be concerned?
- How will we know if my dog has entropion too?

If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian -- they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.

Resources:

[1. "Ectropion in Dogs." The Golden Gait 17.3 \(1982\): 26-28. Jan. 2014. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <<http://www.gpgrc.org/GGait/2014-01.pdf>>.](#)