

Nethra Arogyam

Ectropion Treatment Options & Strategies



EYE CARE WITH CARE

Ectropion

Causes, Symptoms & Treatment



Dr Hareesh K V
Medical director
Abhishek Nethradhama

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Ectropion is a condition that affects the eyelids, causing them to turn outward and exposing the inner surface of the eyelid. This malpositioning can lead to discomfort, eye irritation, and in some cases, vision problems. Understanding the causes, recognizing the symptoms, and exploring treatment options are crucial in managing this condition effectively.

Causes of Ectropion

Ectropion can occur due to various reasons, often related to changes in the tissues and muscles around the eyelids. **Some common causes include:**

- **Aging:** As we age, the skin loses elasticity, and muscles weaken, leading to laxity in the eyelid tissues, which can result in ectropion.

- **Facial Paralysis:** Nerve damage or conditions like Bell's palsy can affect facial muscles, including those controlling eyelid movement, contributing to ectropion.
- **Scarring:** Injury, burns, or previous surgeries around the eye can cause scarring, pulling the eyelid outward.
- **Genetic Factors:** In some cases, ectropion might be present at birth or develop due to inherited conditions affecting eyelid structure.
- **Sun Damage:** Chronic sun exposure can lead to skin changes, making it more prone to ectropion.

Symptoms of Ectropion

Recognizing the symptoms of ectropion is essential for early intervention. Common



signs include:

- **Outward Turning of Eyelid:** The most visible sign, where the lower eyelid sags or turns away from the eye.
- **Excessive Tearing:** Due to improper drainage of tears caused by the malpositioned eyelid.
- **Eye Irritation:** Grittiness, redness, and a feeling of dryness or burning in the eyes due to exposure of the inner eyelid.
- **Blurry Vision:** In severe cases, ectropion can cause vision problems due to inadequate protection of the eye surface.
- **Decreasing vision**
- **Pain**
- **Light sensitivity**
- **Rapidly increasing/long standing redness.**

Managing Ectropion:

Treatment Options and Strategies

Managing ectropion involves various treatment options and strategies aimed at correcting the outward turning of the eyelid. The approach to managing ectropion depends on the severity of the condition, its underlying cause, and individual patient factors.

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Here are the primary treatment options and strategies:

1. Conservative Management:

In mild cases of ectropion or instances where surgery might not be immediately necessary, conservative measures can be employed:

- **Artificial Tears/Lubricating Ointments:** These help alleviate dryness and reduce irritation caused by exposure of the inner eyelid. They provide moisture and can ease discomfort.
- **Eye Drops or Ointments:** Prescription medications, such as antibiotics or anti-inflammatory drugs, might be recommended to manage any associated infections or inflammations.
- **Eyelid Taping or Temporary Solutions:** These techniques are used to temporarily support the eyelid in a correct position. They can be helpful in some mild cases.

2. Surgical Intervention:

When conservative measures aren't effective or if the ectropion is severe, surgical correction may be necessary. Several surgical procedures are available, depending on the specific needs of the patient:

- **Horizontal Tightening:** This surgery involves tightening the lower eyelid by removing a small section of tissue to reduce its laxity and repositioning it to the proper alignment.
- **Lateral Tarsal Strip Surgery:** Here, the surgeon reinforces the weakened eyelid by using a strip of tissue from the outer

corner of the eye. This helps in tightening and supporting the eyelid.

- **Skin Grafting:** In cases where there's significant skin loss or scarring contributing to ectropion, a skin graft might be used to replace the damaged skin and support proper eyelid positioning.
- **Canthoplasty:** This procedure involves reinforcing the attachment between the eyelid and the bone surrounding the eye (canthal tendons), restoring the eyelid's normal position.

3. Prevention and Long-Term Care:

After treatment, there are strategies to prevent recurrence and maintain good eye health:

- **Regular Follow-Ups:** Routine check-ups with an ophthalmologist are crucial post-treatment to monitor healing and

prevent complications.

- **Eye Protection:** Wearing sunglasses and protective eyewear can safeguard the eyes from sun damage and potential injuries, reducing the risk of future ectropion.
- **Prompt Attention to Eye Issues:** Addressing any eye infections, injuries, or inflammations promptly can prevent complications that might lead to ectropion.

Managing ectropion involves a tailored approach based on the specific needs of the individual. Consulting with an ophthalmologist or an oculoplastic surgeon is essential to determine the most suitable treatment plan, whether it involves conservative measures or surgical intervention. This helps ensure the best possible outcome and long-term eye health.

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ಅಭಿಷೇಕ್ ನೇತ್ರಧಾಮ ABHISHEK NETHRADHAMA

OUR BRANCHES

Doddaballapura
Devangha complex, Near Rangappa Circle, Opposite Sai Baba temple, Doddaballapura - 561203
Mob: +91 - 77958 05848 / 89714 79662

Arsikere
1st Floor, Opp. Bus Stand, Railway Station Road, Arsikere, Hassan Dist.-573 103,
Phone : 8174231030 / 8892976064

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ABHISHEK NETHRADHAMA
Krupa Bindu #971/37, MIG, 15th 'A' Cross, 'A' Sector, Next to G.K. Vale Studio, KHB High Rise Apartment Road, Yelahanka New Town, Bengaluru - 64
Ph: 080 - 40933219 / 7795715203

E-mail : abhisheknetradhama@yahoo.in Web: www.abhisheknetradhama.com