

# **DISTICHIASIS** **& ECTOPIC CILIA**

## **WHAT ARE DISTICHIA?**

Distichia are extra, abnormally positioned eyelashes (cilia) along the eyelid margin. A few distichia hairs may not cause any issues, but presence of multiple or very spiky hairs can cause irritation, leading to redness, squinting and increased tear production. These will need to be removed to improve comfort.

## **WHAT ARE ECTOPIC CILIA?**

Ectopic cilia are hairs that grow out of the conjunctiva inside the eyelid, and point directly towards the cornea. These always cause irritation and are associated with corneal ulcers so must be removed. They can be very small, and difficult to spot without magnification. These must be removed surgically to remove the follicle.

## **TREATMENT OPTIONS**

- Manual removal:** plucking the hairs is the least invasive and costly method, but they will grow back in a few weeks.
- Cryoeplilation:** Involves freezing the distichia follicles inside the eyelid margin. This technique is beneficial to remove several distichia. Side effects include: temporary swelling of the eyelid, temporary loss of pigment on the eyelid margin. More than one procedure may be required to remove all distichiae, but symptoms are often improved by a reduction in number after the first.
- Electrolysis:** The distichia follicles are burnt with an ophthalmic electrolysis unit. More than one procedure may be required to remove all the hairs.
- Conjunctival Strip Surgery:** Removal of a strip of palpebral conjunctiva containing the hair follicles. This is reserved for severe cases, or when non-invasive techniques have failed. Post-operative complications are rare, but include: minor eyelid scarring, and a reduced tear film quality.

## **WHICH TREATMENT IS RIGHT FOR MY PET?**

Your pet will be assessed by one of our ophthalmologists, and they will discuss the treatment options available to you based on their observation. At Optivet we respect each patient as an individual, and are here to advise you throughout your pets diagnosis and treatment.

*Optivet Referrals*

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## **ANY QUESTIONS?**

Do not hesitate to contact us.

Call us on: 012433888091

Email us on: [advice@optivet.com](mailto:advice@optivet.com)

Visit our website: [www.optivet.com](http://www.optivet.com)

## **WE ARE HERE FOR YOU**

At Optivet, we understand that your pet is part of your family, and when under our care you are part of ours. Our specialist team are on hand to help with any queries or concerns you may have. Our emotional support advisor Sam is always on hand if you feel overwhelmed at any time, or would just like a listening ear.



Author: Kate Salmon MA VetMB GPCertSAM  
PgCertSAOphthal MRCVS  
Designed by Samantha Lympany-Tier  
BSc (Hons) PTLIS PGCert (ICL)