

# Rowe Referrals

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# Rowe

Referrals

## *Distichiasis*



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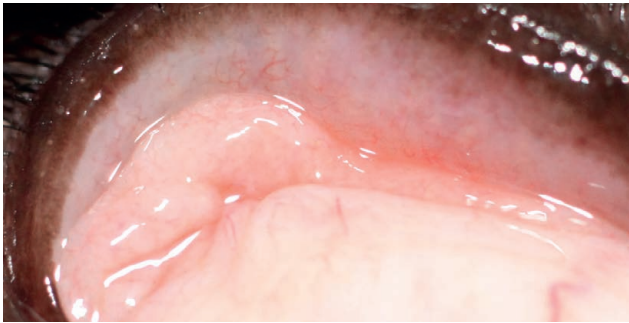
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# Distichiasis

## What is distichiasis?

Distichiasis is a medical term for abnormal growth of hairs along the eyelid margins.



## What causes distichiasis?

The most likely explanation is a genetic cause. However the mode of inheritance is not clear.

## Can both eyes be affected?

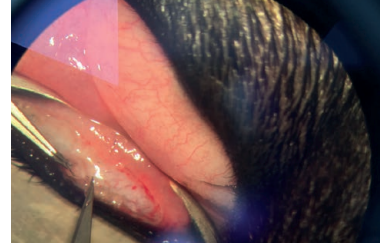
Yes, but usually not similarly.

## Are any breeds predisposed?

Yes, the most commonly affected breeds include: American Cocker Spaniel, English Cocker Spaniel, Welsh Springer Spaniel, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Flat-Coated Retriever, Boxer, English Bulldog, Havanese, Shetland Sheepdog, Shih Tzu, Pekingese, Tibetan Terrier, Dachshund, Poodle, Jack Russell Terrier.

## Does distichiasis always cause problems?

No, in the majority of cases distichiae are incidental findings of no clinical significance. However in some cases, the hairs can cause irritation of the surface of the eye (cornea), in which case surgery is recommended.



## What treatment options do I have?

There are several treatment options for distichiasis, all of which require general anaesthesia and surgery. Even though simple plucking of the hairs may be performed in order to assess the clinical relevance of distichiasis, it is not a permanent solution since the remaining root will continue to produce a new hair within a matter of a few weeks. Surgical treatments to resolve the problem include: excision of the roots of the distichiae, freezing inside the eyelids to damage the roots of the distichiae, and use of low voltage electric current to destroy the base of the distichiae. In our practice we tend to surgically remove the roots of the distichiae using the high magnification provided by the operating microscope.

## Can distichiasis return after surgery?

Since we can only remove the roots of hairs which are visible, there is a risk of further development of distichiasis adjacent to the hair follicles which have been removed. However the risk of recurrence is lower in dogs older than 2½ years as distichiae tend to develop in the early years of life.

***If you have any further questions regarding this or any other condition feel free to contact us.***