



By your veterinary ophthalmologist

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## Ectopic cilia

### What is an ectopic cilia ?

An ectopic cilium is an eyelash hair that has grown in an abnormal location and is misdirected towards the eye surface. These hairs are usually located on the inside of the upper eyelid. When the pet blinks, the hair rubs on the surface of the cornea (clear front part of the eye) and causes severe pain and oftentimes results in a corneal ulceration (scratch).

The surgical procedure to remove the abnormal lash involves cutting out a small section of the inside of the eyelid (conjunctiva or white part of the eye) in order to remove the hair and hair follicle. It is important to have the hair follicle removed instead of simply plucking out the offending eyelash because if the follicle remains, the hair will likely grow back.

Removal of the hair follicle will prevent the same hair from growing back in the same place, but it does not prevent new ectopic hairs from growing in different areas in the future. If new ectopic cilia grow, then they would need to be removed in the same manner.

