

Electrolysis for ingrown eye lashes

Trichiasis (Ingrowing eye lashes)

Trichiasis is an inward growing or misdirection of the eye lash or lashes. The lid is in the normal position but the eye lash grows inwards. This then rubs against the front of the eye and can cause watering, irritation, infection or even permanent damage to the front of the eye.

What can cause Trichiasis?

We don't always know the cause but Trichiasis can result from:

- Injury or previous surgery to the eyelid
- Blepharitis, which is an inflammatory condition of the eyelid margin, can cause eyelashes to grow in the wrong direction

How can Trichiasis be treated?

Trichiasis can be treated by:

- Epilation – where the eye lashes can be pulled out, they may regrow in four to six weeks, but they can be epilated again

- Electrolysis treatment can provide a more permanent solution, preventing the lashes from regrowing but this may have to be repeated several times to obtain a satisfactory result.

The eye lash must be visible to perform electrolysis.

What does electrolysis involve?

The treatment involves an operation, and the procedure is performed under local anaesthetic, as a day case, with or without sedation. Local anaesthetic eye drops are used along with an injection into the eyelid to numb the area. Once the eyelid is numb you should not feel pain or discomfort but you will still feel touch or feelings of pressure.

Electrolysis procedure

Electrolysis consists of inserting a fine needle into the lash root and passing an electrical or radiofrequency current through it, attempting to destroy the lash follicle.

Are there any other treatments for Trichiasis?

Freezing and laser treatment can sometimes be performed to remove eyelashes but this may not be the best treatment for you.

Are there any risks or side effects of the operation?

- There may be bruising and swelling around the eye.
- There is a small risk of infection and some antibiotic ointment will be given as a precaution.
- There is a possibility of recurrence; Repeat electrolysis may have to be performed to obtain a satisfactory result.

What are the benefits?

- Relief of symptoms.

- Reduced risk of eye infection.
- Permanent removal of the eye lashes.

Will I need to be seen again after surgery?

You will have a routine clinic appointment approximately six to eight weeks following surgery to see if the eyelashes have re-grown. An appointment will be posted to you.