Dermoids

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Dermoids are a developmental abnormality we sometimes see in our patients. During development of the eye in the womb, a piece of skin (usually with hair follicles and hair) accidentally develops on the eye: the cornea, conjunctiva, third eyelid and/or eyelid. They are literally a 'hairy eyeball!'

This condition is seen in young animals and is present at birth. They may not be noticed until the puppy is a few months old. As the animal grows, the hairs grow, resulting in irritation. Furthermore, if the dermoid is large, vision can be affected. Surgery by a veterinary eye specialist is recommended. Using an operating microscope, the surgeon will carefully dissect the dermoid from the cornea, which is less than 1 mm thick.
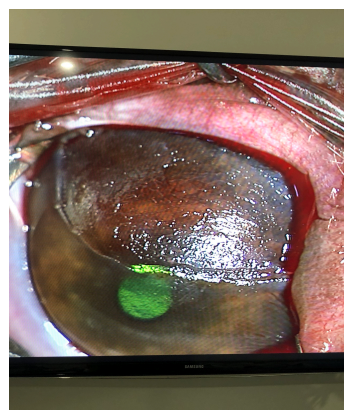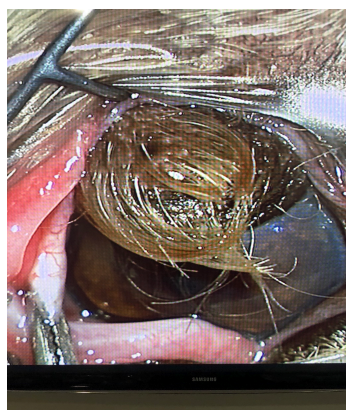

A large demoid with very long hairs protruding

You can imagine how annoying it would be!

Small dermoid with a few long hairs

Surgery

A keratectomy (excision of part of the cornea) is required for a dermoids on the cornea. Minimal scarring occurs in superficial lesions but deeper dermoids may require corneal reconstructions. Deeper lesions may result in additional scarring but vision loss is extremely rare. Dermoids on conjunctiva, third eyelid and eyelid are surgically removed and the remaining tissue closed with dissolving sutures.

Dermoids certainly are a weird creation!

It is important to remove any hair follicles present, otherwise regrowth of irritating hairs can occur. An operating microscope, highly specialised equipment and experience is essential when dealing with such corneal procedures and referral to an eye specialist is advisable.

If you have a topic you would like to know more about send us an email!

Dermoid removal under the operating microscope

Large dermoid removed compared to a cotton bud tip

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