

WHAT IS EPIBLEPHARON?

Epiblepharon is a condition in which the eyelid muscle and skin push against the edge of the eyelid to form a fold of tissue. This can cause the eyelashes to point upwards and inwards towards the eye ball. (see Figure 1.) Epiblepharon mainly affects the lower eyelid, but can be seen in the upper eyelid too. It happens because the deep muscles inside the eyelid are not well attached to the front part of the eyelid. Epiblepharon is present at birth and more common in Asian or Hispanic children. It can be in one or both eyes.



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Figure 1. Photo showing epiblepharon where eyelashes point upwards and inwards towards the eye ball because of the shape of the lower eyelid.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF EPIBLEPHARON?

Symptoms of epiblepharon are different for different children. Many children have no symptoms. Other children with epiblepharon can have a gritty feeling



that something is in the eye, redness, irritation, eyelid rubbing and tearing. These symptoms often happen when the eyelashes touch the eye and cause little scratches on the surface of the eye. When children are young, the eyelashes are very soft and do not cause scratches or irritation. As children grow, the eyelashes become more stiff, leading to scratches, eye pain and light sensitivity. Symptoms may be more noticeable when the child is looking downwards (such as when reading) because this worsens the inward rotation of the eyelid and lashes. Large scratches ([abrasions](#)) on the surface of the eye can get infected and have permanent scarring.

IS THERE TREATMENT FOR EPIBLEPHARON?

Epiblepharon may go away on its own in the first few years of life as the child grows and the eyelids and facial bones develop. If it does not go away, or causes scratches on the eye, treatments may be needed. Artificial tear drops and ointments can help with symptoms, but surgery may be needed to fix the problem. During surgery a small piece of skin and muscle from the edge of the eyelid that is causing the eyelids to turn upwards is removed. This helps the eyelashes to turn outward away from the eye.

Speak with your ophthalmologist if you have questions about epiblepharon.

More scientific information about epiblepharon can be found on this website:

<https://eyewiki.org/Epiblepharon>