

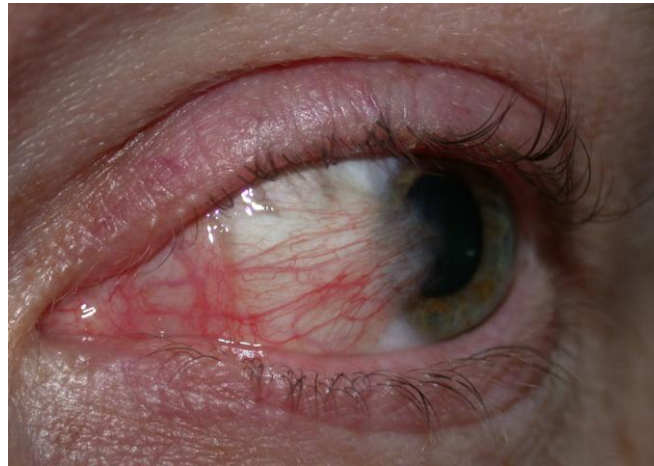


PTERYGIUM

What is a pterygium?

A pterygium (pronounced ter-idg-ee-um) is a fleshy growth of tissue, which commonly grows in a triangular shape from the nasal side of the sclera (white of the eye) extending toward the pupil.

The cause is not fully understood however there is some association with UV exposure, wind and dust. Occupations, such as farmers, fishermen, builders who spend long periods of time outdoors show a high prevalence of developing a pterygium.



How is a pterygium treated?

Eye drops can help reduce irritation and redness caused by the pterygium. A pterygium may be exacerbated by the presence of other eye conditions including Blepharitis.

A pterygium can be surgically removed, however due to their growth they can recur. Surgical removal is indicated when the pterygium is large, sight threatening or cosmetically unacceptable.

Surgery is a day procedure at hospital under a local or general anaesthetic. It involved the excision of the pterygium tissue and a graft (from under the upper eye lid).

Post-operatively the eye can feel uncomfortable for a few weeks. To protect the eye and aid the healing process eye drops are prescribed and sunglasses are recommended.

What can I do to help avoid pterygium growth?

Wear UV protective sunglasses, avoid dusty and windy environments and use artificial tear drops for dryness in your eyes.