

A Rare Case of Cilia Incarnata Externum

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Abstract

Cilia incarnata externum is the term used to describe an eyelash that burrows under the skin to the surface. The patient presents due to the appearance of bump. It is asymptomatic and usually requires no treatment but as the patient had cosmetic blemish, a small incision is usually given over the bump and after which cilia is epilated.

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A 17-year-old boy presented to outpatient department with complaint of appearance of bump in his right eye upper lid. Patient has no other symptoms/ history of any trauma. Examination revealed a misdirected eye lash running underneath the skin from the lid margin of the upper right eyelid. Hair was running vertically underneath the skin (Figure 1,2). Vision was 6/6 and there were no symptoms and any other abnormal findings. Hence, we concluded with the diagnosis of cilia incarnata externum. After anesthetizing we had just incised the skin over the bump and cilia was epilated.

Cilia incarnata is the misdirection of eyelashes whereby they grow under the skin through the surface 'or' posteriorly to the conjunctival surface instead of emerging normally from the eyelid margin. The lash root is normal in both the conditions.¹ The lash grows in the path of least resistance.

Cilia incarnata is caused in adults by mechanical misdirection of either the lash follicles 'or' the lashes themselves as a result of some abnormal lid condition.²⁻⁵ Previously most of the cases reported were of both females and males.⁶

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Figure 1: External image depicting root of origin of cilia incarnata externum shown by black arrow above right eye



Figure 2: External image depicting bump over right upper eyelid as shown by black arrow

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