

# Cilium inversum

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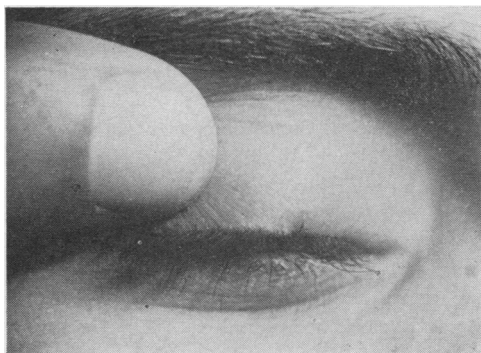
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Duke-Elder (1964) has defined cilium inversum as a very rare condition usually regarded as congenital wherein, owing to an anomaly in the disposition of the follicle, an eyelash grows in the wrong direction, that is, inwards away from the lid margin. Tibbles (1923) and Schreiber (1924) described cases in which the cilium could be seen shining through the skin, but no report has since appeared in the literature.

## Case report

**A Hindu male medical student aged 22 years** complained of the sensation of a needle-prick whenever he rubbed his right upper lid. The symptoms had been present for only one month. There was no history of any kind of trauma.

*Examination* A short but stout cilium 3 mm. long was seen growing upwards beneath the skin from the margin of the right upper lid at the junction of the outer two-thirds and inner one-third; it was shining through the skin which was slightly raised and stretched (Figure). The pointed tip of the cilium pricked the eyelid like a needle when the patient rubbed his eye. The lid was normal in all other respects and showed no scarring under high magnification. A small incision was made in the skin overlying the misdirected cilium. The hair was removed and the follicle destroyed by electro-diathermy.



FIGURE

## Comment

Although the condition is thought to be due to a congenital anomaly in the disposition of the follicle, it is not clear why the cilium started growing in the wrong direction at so late an age in the absence of signs or history of trauma.

## References

- DUKE-ELDER, S. (1964) "A System of Ophthalmology", vol. 3, pt 2, p. 876. Kimpton, London  
SCHREIBER, L. (1924) "Die Krankheiten der Augenlider", 3rd ed., p. 380. Springer, Berlin  
TIBBLES, S. (1923) *Brit. med. J.*, **2**, 521