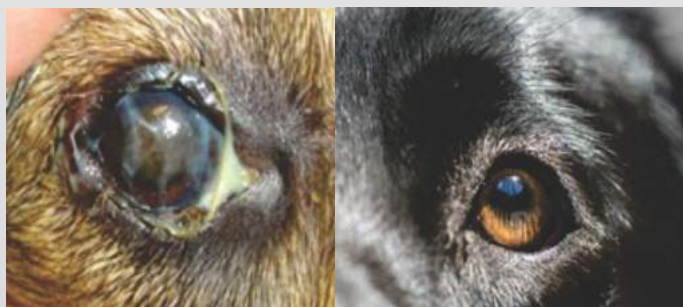


Dry eye in dogs

Does your dog have sore looking eyes? Have you noticed a thick discharge from the eyes, especially in the morning?

I'm sure we can all imagine the **discomfort** and **irritation** caused by having dry eyes. If you have not experienced this, try not to blink for even 10 seconds and you can experience what dry eyes feel like. Every time you and your pet blinks, a film of lubricating tears is distributed over the surface of the eye. Tears are essential to the comfort of the eye by bringing their lubricating, soothing properties. But did you know tears are even more important than just providing lubrication? They also contain anti-bacterial proteins that help prevent infection of the eye and also serve to flush away any irritants and air-borne particles that land on the eye on a daily basis.

Dry eye, or **Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca (KCS)** as it is officially known, is a condition in which there is a deficiency in the production of healthy tears by the eye. The reason for this is most commonly an immune mediated destruction of the tear producing gland tissue. We know that some breeds are particularly predisposed to this including **Cocker Spaniels, Schnauzers** and **West Highland White Terrier** dogs though all dog breeds can be effected. Dry eye in cats is much less commonly seen.



If tears are not produced by the eye it does not take long for the eye to become infected and sore, the conjunctiva (pink tissue around the eye) will become red, and a **characteristic thick gooey yellow discharge from the eye will often develop**. Without treatment this disease can even lead to blindness. Most commonly at home you might notice that your dog is blinking more frequently, has red, sore looking eyes and has a thick discharge from the eye especially first thing in the morning.

Fortunately this disease is very easily diagnosed and managed at home. If we suspect a patient has dry eye we simply place a specifically designed thin piece of paper under the eyelid which measures the tear production over a minute. If we are seeing an insufficient amount of tears then a diagnosis is made and we can begin treatment.

Treatment for dry eye is an ointment given 1-2 times per day. Normally we would start our patients on this ointment and get them to come back in for a recheck in 3-4 weeks. If we have noticed a great response then we can reassess the dosing schedule and also discuss long term treatment which is in the form of continued eye ointments or drops.

So if you are concerned about your dog's eyes, why not come in to have a check with any of our vets, and we can make sure that your dog has the clearest, most beautiful eyes in town!



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Opening Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 7:00pm

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