



Could your dog have dry eye?

Dry eye is quite common - 1 in 22 dogs are affected¹.

Dogs may only show one or some of the signs below, despite severely reduced tear production and destruction of tear glands.

Early recognition of this devastating disease and prompt treatment are vital to prevent suffering and preserve sight.

Signs to look out for:

- Uncomfortable eyes – your dog may rub the eyes, blink excessively or keep the eyes closed
- Eyes red and inflamed
- Discharge from the eyes
- Dry looking eyes
- Frequent eye infections or corneal ulcers

Specialist ophthalmologists recommend testing for dry eye in virtually all dogs with sore eyes.

All breeds can develop dry eye at any age, but some are more prone. These breeds include Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, West Highland White Terriers, Shih Tzus, Cocker Spaniels, Pekingese, Yorkshire Terriers, Pugs and Bulldogs. Some owners of predisposed breeds opt to have their dog tested at routine appointments such as vaccination to make sure they detect dry eye early.

www.dog-dry-eye.co.uk

Provided as a service by
MSD Animal Health
the manufacturers of Optimmune®

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Reference:
1. Determination of Schirmer Tear Test Values in 1000 dogs.
Pierce V, Harmer E, Williams D. BSAVA abstract 2006.

Further information is available from:
MSD Animal Health, Walton Manor
Walton, Milton Keynes MK7 7AJ
Item code: SA-066126



Is your dog suffering from 'dry eye'?

Take a closer look

www.dog-dry-eye.co.uk





What is 'dry eye'?

'Dry eye' or keratoconjunctivitis sicca (KCS) is caused by destruction of the tear glands by the dog's own immune system. This means that not enough tears are produced.

Damage to the tear glands is irreversible, and eventually they are completely destroyed. Dry eye is a painful condition, and ultimately leads to permanent blindness.

KCS is a lifelong condition, and requires lifelong treatment

Why is loss of tears so important?

Natural tears are essential for healthy eyes. They have many important functions which are lost in dry eye; they carry vital nutrients and oxygen, lubricate and cleanse the eye, and help protect against infection.

Without tears, the eye becomes very dry and uncomfortable. Eye infections and ulcers become more common, and growth of new blood vessels and pigmentation can develop on the surface of the eye. Eventually these changes can lead to permanent blindness.

It is very important to diagnose KCS early, before these undesirable changes become severe or much of the tear gland tissue is destroyed

How is it diagnosed?

Your vet will measure your dog's tear production using a Schirmer Tear Test (STT). This is a quick and simple test and the results are available immediately. It is not uncomfortable for your dog and no anaesthetic or sedation is needed.

A special paper strip is placed in each eye for just 60 seconds, and the amount of tear production measured. Both eyes should be tested as the results are often quite different.

If the result is low, your dog is not producing sufficient tears and treatment for dry eye should be started immediately.



A dog having its tear production measured



Although they look very different, both these dogs had advanced dry eye, producing virtually no tears when measured.

How is dry eye treated?

Treatment for dry eye has two important aspects:

1. Control the underlying destruction of the tear glands
2. Treat the effects on the eyes that we can see

Your dog will need treatment for the rest of its life to control tear gland destruction and prevent discomfort and undesirable changes to the eyes, including possible blindness. Regular check ups with your vet are an important part of this treatment.

Your vet may prescribe an eye ointment which controls destruction of the tear glands, increases natural tear production and controls painful inflammation.



Before treatment



With ongoing treatment

The sooner dry eye is diagnosed and treated, the better the long-term outlook for your dog's eyes and vision.

Please ask your vet for further information and visit www.dog-dry-eye.co.uk