



Cherry Eye (Third Eyelid Gland Prolapse)

deformed third eyelid cartilages.

The cause of third eyelid gland prolapse is unknown; however, a hereditary predisposition is present in some breeds of dogs. It has been proposed that a laxity of the structures which attach the gland to the orbit may contribute to the condition.

Predisposed breeds include: the American Cocker Spaniel, Beagle, English Bulldog, French Bulldog, Chinese Shar Pei, Newfoundland, Neopolitan Mastiff, Great Dane, Lhasa Apso, Cane Corso, Bloodhound, Shih Tzu, Boston Terrier and Pekingese.

Statistically, 64% of dogs will develop cherry eye in one eye only and the remaining will develop it in both eyes. Bilateral prolapses can occur simultaneously or at different stages, and research has found that 71% of dogs will develop the condition in the opposite eye up to 3 months later.

Diagnosis

Dogs from 5 month old to 9 years old can be affected but most dogs are less than 2 years of age. Females and males are equally affected.

Visualisation of a red round mass protruding from the corner of the eye is usually the most common thing seen.

A complete eye exam, with a Schirmer Tear Test is indicated to determine whether tear production is altered in the affected eye; to rule out tumours of the third eyelid; and to

assess for other abnormalities such as

Treatment

Only surgical treatment is effective and aims to replace the gland to its normal position. The currently recommended technique is the "pocket" technique. This involves creating a pocket on the inside of the lid and removing some of the stretched tissue over the gland and then placing internal sutures to close it so that they don't come into contact with the surface of the eye.

It is important to note

- Due to the sensitive nature of the third eyelid, the lid itself can often look swollen after surgery. This is quiet normal and should settle after a week or so.
- Approximately 14% of cases may recur and a second correction attempt needs to be performed.

Your dog will be dispensed an antibiotic eye ointment to be applied twice a day for approx 5-7 days, and also anti-inflammatory tablets to be given orally. A post-surgical revisit will be required after 10-14 days.

Complications following surgical replacement of the gland are uncommon. Failure to reduce the inflammation with worsening of swelling and redness after the surgery is not normal and veterinary advice should be sort.