This factsheet has been prepared to help you understand brachycephalic ocular syndrome. Whilst it is hoped this factsheet addresses many concerns you may have, please contact us if you have any further questions regarding the condition.

What is brachycephalic ocular syndrome?

• It is a term used for a combination of conditions that result in poor health of the eyes in short nosed dog/cat breeds.
• It is usually a combination of tight, inverted eyelids, causing eyelid hairs to contact the surface of the eye (cornea), and shallow eye sockets resulting in protruding eyes.
• Frequently, there are other abnormalities associated with this condition (including abnormal eyelashes/hairs surrounding the eyelids).

Why does it occur?

This condition is the result of selectively breeding for short noses and large appearing eyes in certain dog and cat breeds. We typically see dogs with this condition due to the development of corneal ulcers, dry eye disease, and development of pigment on the surface of the eye.
In contrast, cats more commonly present with non-healing corneal ulcers or a condition called cornea sequestrum (where a scab of pigmented, dead corneal tissue develops).
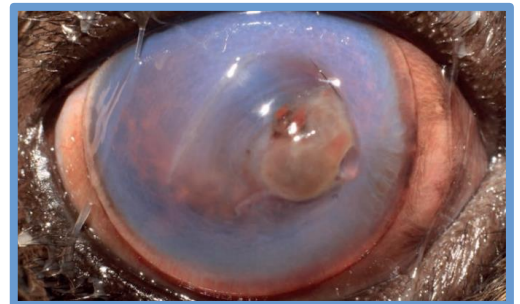
Can both eyes be affected?

Yes, both eyes are almost always equally affected.

What treatment options do I have?

As we typically see dogs and cats affected by this condition for corneal ulcers and other ocular surface diseases, it usually requires treatment of the presenting problem as well as treatment of the underlying brachycephalic ocular syndrome.
Treatment usually involves:
• surgery
• lifelong medical treatment to address underlying tear film abnormalities.

What happens if I do nothing?

If left untreated, ocular surface disease will continue as a result of this condition. This may result in blindness or even loss of one or both eyes.

Are any breeds predisposed?
We tend to see this condition in the Pug, French Bulldog, Shih Tzu, Lhasa Apso and Persian cats, however any small short nosed breed can be affected.