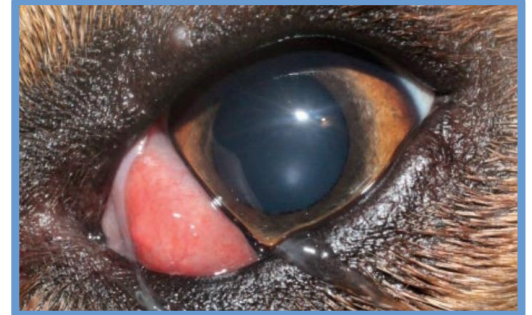


This factsheet has been prepared to help you understand about cherry eye. Whilst it is hoped this factsheet addresses many concerns you may have, please contact us if you have any further questions regarding the condition.

What is the third eyelid gland?

It is a tear gland located behind the third eyelid and contributes between 30-40% of the total tear film. The tear film is necessary for the supply of oxygen and nourishment to the cornea, providing corneal health and clarity. Without proper function of the third eyelid gland there is a high risk for the development of dry eye disease.



What is cherry eye and why does it occur?

Cherry eye is the common term for a prolapse of the third eyelid gland. It is called cherry eye due to the characteristic appearance of a pink lump in the inner corner of the eye, resembling a cherry. Why cherry eye occurs remains a mystery but poor attachment of the gland to the underlying tissue as well as a potential genetic component are current theories.

Can both eyes be affected?

Yes, but usually not at the same time. Typically, the other eye becomes affected several months after the first eye.

What treatment options do I have?

The recommended treatment for cherry eye is surgical replacement of the gland. There are several surgical treatment methods for cherry eye, we usually perform a modified version of the so called 'pocket technique' performed with an operating microscope. We discourage surgical removal of the third eyelid gland as it can result in dry eye disease, which can require life-long treatment.

What is the success-rate of surgical treatment?

The current literature reports a success rate of 80%, however we expect a success rate of greater than 95%

What happens if I agree to have the surgery performed?

After a pre-operative physical examination and blood test, surgery is usually performed the same day. Your pet will be discharged either the same day or the following day, if post-operative monitoring is required. Aftercare includes anti-inflammatory and antibiotic medication as well as antibiotic and lubricating eye drops. The exact treatment plan will be discussed on discharge. A postoperative check-up is usually scheduled 1 week after surgery and a final check-up at 4 weeks after surgery. Suture removal is not necessary as absorbable suture material is used.

What happens if I do nothing?

If no surgery is performed, the prolapsed gland will remain in position. Not only is it cosmetically disturbing and irritating to your pet, but the function of the gland will deteriorate over time. Chronic prolapse predisposes the eye to the development of dry eye disease, which may require life-long therapy and result in complications such as corneal disease.

Are any breeds predisposed?

Cherry eye can affect all breeds of dog, but it is usually seen in breeds such as English and French Bulldogs, Great Danes, Lhasa Apsos and Shih Tzus to name a few.