

This factsheet has been prepared to help you understand glaucoma. 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 glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a term we use to describe conditions associated with increased pressure in the eye

Why does it occur?

There are several reasons for the development of glaucoma. In general, glaucoma is caused by an imbalance between fluid production and drainage in the eye. We try to differentiate primary glaucoma from secondary glaucoma.

Primary glaucoma – caused by genetic factors/developmental factors

Secondary glaucoma – caused by underlying conditions such as chronic inflammation (uveitis), and intraocular mass or displacement of the lens.

Can both eyes be affected?

Yes, especially in cases of primary glaucoma we expect both eyes to be involved. Usually there is a time delay between the onset of the disease in both eyes.

What treatment options do I have?

Treatment options in the early stages of glaucoma involve various eye drops to either reduce fluid production or increase fluid drainage. However, in most cases medical treatment may not be successful. Therefore various surgical methods can be used to control normal pressure in the eye. Surgical methods aim to destroy the fluid producing structures in the eye. However, despite best efforts to optimize medical and surgical treatments for glaucoma, the long-term prognosis for vision remains guarded.

What happens if I do nothing?

If left untreated, both primary and secondary glaucoma will ultimately result in permanent loss of vision and possible loss of the eye. We know that glaucoma in humans can cause severe migraine type headaches, so it is likely to be similar in animals.



Are any breeds predisposed?

Primary glaucoma – American Cocker Spaniel, English Cocker Spaniel, English Springer Spaniel, Bassett Hound, Shar Pei and Chow Chow.

Secondary glaucoma – can affect any breed of dog or cat.

