



# OPHTHALMOLOGY

Frequently Asked Questions



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### Can my pet have surgery or all the necessary diagnostic tests the same day as the appointment?

While some diagnostic tests can be carried out on the same day as the initial consultation, other tests which require sedation or general anaesthesia (for example: a CT or MRI scan) have to be scheduled based on availability of the anaesthesia and other services. This often means such further diagnostics are often scheduled at a later date.

### Does my pet have to spend the night before or after surgery?

This is very much dependent on the nature of the surgical procedure performed and thus the level of post-operative monitoring and treatment, namely pain control, that is indicated; patient health, age, and how well they recover from the sedation/general anaesthesia, all play a role in determining the length of hospital stay. While the majority of patients are admitted early morning on the day of the surgery, and discharged later that day, there are many cases where overnight hospitalisation will be indicated. The ophthalmologist will discuss the procedure, post-operative care, and anticipated length of hospitalisation ahead of any procedures.

### Do I have to return to SCVS for re-check examinations after surgery or can I go somewhere closer?

There are many situations where your primary care vet may be able to provide further monitoring/reassessment and treatment of your pet's eye disease based on our examination findings and recommendations. For more complicated eye diseases though, your family veterinary practice may be dependent on us to provide long-term management, thus requiring your reassessment visits to be performed by our ophthalmologists at SCVS.

### What does a regular ophthalmology appointment include, and what does it cost?

Each new and re-check ophthalmic consultation will last up to 30 minutes. The ophthalmologist will have already reviewed your pet's clinical history provided by your primary care vet. They will, however, briefly summarise this with you, and ask further questions and details pertaining specifically to your pet's ocular concern and their vision. A full ophthalmic examination, starting with a distant examination and following through with examination from the external aspects of the eye (eyelids, third eyelid conjunctiva, cornea) through to the very deepest structure of the eye (retina and optic nerve head), will then be carried out. This will often sometimes include tear production measurement (Schirmer tear test); measurement of intraocular pressure (tonometry); and assessment for corneal ulceration (fluorescein staining). Please note that as part of assessment of your pets' vision, a maze test may be set up in light (photopic) and dark (scotopic) environmental lighting conditions for further evaluation. Once the examination is complete, the ophthalmologist will discuss the findings and recommendations in detail. If further diagnostics and/or surgery is indicated, the clinician will work with you to arrange a suitable date for you to return with your pet for these tests/procedures. An estimate of anticipated costs for any extra procedures or surgery will be provided. A full report, usually provided during the same week as your pets visit, will be created and emailed to both you and your primary care vet (the referring veterinary practice) detailing the findings and outcome of the consultation. Please contact SCVS directly to discuss examination and price costs.

### Can you recommend medications for my pet without examining it?

You may be surprised to hear that many ocular conditions present with very similar signs and symptoms. This makes it nearly impossible to make a correct diagnosis over the phone or even via photographs sent electronically. Further, it is against the law and unethical to prescribe treatment for a patient and client with which we have not established an appropriate client-veterinarian-patient relationship. For these reasons, we cannot prescribe or recommend treatments without establishing this relationship and examining your pet in the first instance.

### Do you have to repeat the tests my vet did and should I bring all of the results with me?

If your veterinary clinic has performed any recent tests on your pet, it is important try and bring these with you to the initial consultation. We likely already to have an electronic copy ahead of your consultation, but from time to time this is not complete. If there were abnormalities noted on the tests, your primary care vet performed; if the testes were not performed recently enough; or if something might have changed between the initial test and the time of your consultation, we may need to repeat certain tests.

### Does my pet have to wear a Buster collar/E-collar after eye surgery?

Due to the fragile nature of the eye and associated surrounding structures, the use of a Buster collar/E-collar is generally critical to the success of any ocular surgery. It does not take much or long for rubbing and/or pawing at the eye which can cause irreversible damage to the eye. The removal of the collar will be advised as soon as it is safely possible to recommend so.

### I have heard there are drops available to treat my pet's cataracts. Is this true?

To date, there have been no studies that have proven medical treatment is successful to either reverse/slow the progression of cataract development, nor to prevent the development of a cataract. At this point in time, surgical removal remains the only known treatment for removal of cataracts in both animals and humans.



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