



SEADOWN

VETERINARY GROUP

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Treatment of dry eye (keratoconjunctivitis sicca)

Dry eye is most commonly reported in dogs, but can occur in other species. Tears are produced by two glands near the eye, and these have an important role in lubrication, and cleanse the eye of debris. Animals with reduced tear production are predisposed to conditions such as conjunctivitis and corneal ulcers. They are also often irritated by their eyes, and untreated dry eye can lead to visual impairment and eventually blindness.

There are many causes of dry eye, but certain breeds such as West Highland White Terriers, Bulldogs and Shih Tzus are over-represented. Dry eye may develop in one or both eyes. This condition is often treated with eyedrops to stimulate tear production. Other medications such as ocular lubricants and antibiotics may provide relief.



Dry eye can be temporary, but is more commonly a permanent condition treated with long term medication and monitoring. Occasionally surgery is carried out to provide an alternative source of lubrication, by means of transposing a salivary duct to the eye. However this is not a straight-forward surgery and is usually only carried out where other means of treatment have failed or are not possible.

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