

# Cherry Eye

“Cherry eye” is the common term used for a prolapsed gland of the third eyelid. Dogs have two tear producing glands in each eye, one is located in the upper lid and the other is located in the lower lid in a membrane called the third eyelid. If the gland prolapses a reddened mass can be seen at the corner of the eye, and when out of its normal position the gland does not circulate blood properly and can also have a swollen appearance.

## How does this happen?

It is thought that a weakness in the eyelid tissue that normally holds the gland in place can result in a cherry eye. It seems to be more common in certain breeds such as the cocker spaniel, beagle, Boston terrier, Shar Pei and bulldogs.

## Is it painful?

Usually this condition is not painful but can interfere with the tear production of the eye. If left untreated the eye is not able to be supplied with adequate tears and it then becomes dry and uncomfortable.

## Treatment:

Surgery is required so that the gland can be placed back in its proper location. There are different techniques used for this type of surgery and they will vary from case to case, however the most common technique is to permanently place a single stitch to draw the gland back where it belongs.

Some postoperative swelling should be expected but this should resolve and the eye should return to normal within 1-2 weeks. An Elizabethan collar must be worn by the dog during this period to prevent the dog from pawing or rubbing the eye.

## Can this happen again?

There is a chance that the prolapse may recur and if this happens it is important to let us know as soon as possible so it can be assessed by a vet. You should also continue to monitor the other eye for the development of a cherry eye.

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