

Red, swollen / inflamed eyes - Dogs

Overview

- Does your dog have red, swollen /inflamed eyes? (commonly referred to as pink eye)
- Many different conditions can cause redness and swelling in the eyes.
- Make an appointment with your vet as soon as you notice anything wrong with your dog's eye(s), a delay in treatment could cause more severe problems to develop.

Red swollen eyes

Redness and swelling/inflammation in the eyes can be caused by many different conditions, some more serious than others. If your dog has developed redness, irritation, inflammation or swelling in either eyes, have them examined and let your vet know about any other symptoms such as discharge, bulging, pain/excessive blinking/keeping an eye closed or cloudiness.



Causes

If your dog has red/swollen/inflamed eyes, they could be suffering from one of the following conditions:

- **An eye infection** - causing inflammation, itching and discharge.
- **Atopic dermatitis** - allergies that affect the skin often also cause inflammation around the eyes.
- **Dry eye** - a condition that reduces tear production, causing the eyes to become dry and inflamed.
- **An eye ulcer** - a wound on the surface of the eye that causes pain, discharge, inflammation and redness.
- **Something irritating** - eyes can be irritated by smoke, dust, sand, wind and chemicals.
- **Something stuck in the eye** - e.g. a grass seed or a cat's claw!
- **Eyelash disorders** - eyelashes growing in the wrong place or direction often cause pain, redness and swelling.
- **Eyelid disorders** - inward or outward turning eyelids often cause pain, redness and swelling/ inflammation.
- **An allergic reaction** - acute allergic reactions often cause swelling around the eyes and other parts of the body.
- **Glaucoma** - increased pressure in the eye. An eye with glaucoma will usually look red, inflamed, cloudy and larger than normal.
- **Exposure keratitis** - a condition common in flat-faced dogs such as the Shih Tzu, Pug and Bulldog caused by bulging eyes that stop proper blinking. Exposure keratitis causes the front of the eye to become dry and inflamed.
- **Uveitis** - inflammation of structures inside the eye.
- **Masses and tumours** - often cause irritation and inflammation.

- **Pannus (chronic superficial keratitis)** - a fault in the immune system that causes inflammation on the surface of the eye (the cornea).

When to contact your vet

Contact your vet for an appointment as soon as you notice anything wrong with your dog's eyes, if they seem to be in pain, ask your vet for an urgent appointment. A delay in treatment could lead to much more serious problems and even loss of vision / blindness.

Find out whether you are eligible for free or low cost PDSA veterinary treatment using our checker below or visit www.pdsa.org.uk/eligibility

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