

Corneal Ulcers

Overview

Corneal ulcers occur when the outermost layer of the surface of the eye (cornea) erodes. This can be due to scratches, burns or drying out of the eye due to reduced tear production or inability to normally blink the eye. Exposure to chemicals, heat, smoke or infections can also cause ulcers of the cornea.

Corneal ulceration can affect any animal. Some older animals may heal more slowly and, therefore, have ulcers that may be more difficult to treat.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Corneal ulcers are generally diagnosed by a thorough eye examination and fluorescein staining of the cornea. The stain is taken up by the ulcer and will fluoresce green when examined with a black light.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Corneal ulcers are often treated with antibiotic eye drops or ointment and atropine to dilate the pupil and reduce pain. Many affected pets will need to wear an Elizabethan collar to prevent rubbing or scratching at the eye while it heals. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Squinting
- Rubbing at the eye
- Increased tearing
- Mucus or pus draining from the eye
- Cloudiness of the cornea
- Inflamed, red conjunctiva (the normally pink tissue surrounding the cornea and lining the eyelids)

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*

