



SEADOWN

VETERINARY GROUP



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Conditions of the third eyelid

The third eyelid is a normal anatomical feature in dogs and cats, but is usually only just visible in the conscious animal. The most common condition of the third eyelid is prolapse of the gland. This is nick-named 'cherry eye' because of its appearance. Whilst rarely painful, the eye looks very odd and long term may become dry and infected because of lack of tear production from the misplaced gland. This condition is mainly a problem in dogs, and is seen more frequently in certain breeds such as Bulldogs and Shih Tzus. Both eyes may be affected, together or at different times. The treatment for this condition is generally surgical re-positioning of the gland under general anaesthesia. It is important to preserve the gland where at all possible, because it produces tears which lubricate the eye.



Less frequently the third eyelid appear prominent because of a problem with the cartilage within it. This may grow too fast in young dogs and become 'scrolled', resulting in an unusual appearance. Surgical correction of the cartilage is the treatment of choice. This complaint is also seen more commonly in specific breeds, such as Great Danes and Mastiff type dogs. Occasionally dogs may suffer from a 'cherry eye' and scrolled cartilage concurrently.

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