

Corneal Ulcers

Corneal ulcers occur for a number of reasons which can be broadly categorised as reduced corneal protection (lack of tears, eyelid abnormalities etc) and increased corneal trauma (foreign objects, viruses, abnormal hairs). Different causes influence whether the ulcer is "simple" or "complicated" and how likely it is to occur again in the future.

Corneal Ulcers are of varying thickness and this is one of the factors which determines healing rate:

- Shallow ulcers are usually "simple" and involve just the epithelium. They usually heal within 4-7 days without scarring.
- Stromal ulcers are "complicated" and require weeks to months to heal completely (although treatment may not last as long), scarring is expected with these. These ulcers may cause eye rupture and are serious.
- Endothelial ulcers are "very complicated" they cannot heal 100% as the cells involved are no longer able to regenerate, a persistent area of fluffy blue oedema is expected even once these are healed. These often result in eye rupture and are very serious.

Ulcers are identified using fluorescein stain - it does not stick to the undamaged eye surface.

If your pet's ulcer has not healed within 7 days it is "complicated" and your vet may need to debride it, do viral testing, anaesthetise or sedate your pet for further examination and treatment, or in some cases, refer your pet to an ophthalmologist. These patients may need frequent revisits and lifelong eye checks.

Treatment of corneal ulcerations can be a lengthy process and may require several rechecks. During these rechecks, repeated tests may be required and additional medications prescribed. Cost of treatment is case dependent. Whilst the length of recovery, cost for revisits and repeated testing may be frustrating, it is very important we manage eye problems carefully for successful outcomes.

Please DO NOT administer eye drops which have previously been dispensed as they may contain medication which can prevent healing and cause further harm.

Treatment for Corneal ulcer is as follows:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Recheck Due:

