

Dry Eye (Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca)

Dry eye is a common progressive condition which is caused by the immune system destroying the cells of the Lacrimal gland where tears are produced. Left untreated the glands are continually damaged and lose the ability to produce tears completely.

Tears perform a vital function. They lubricate eyelid movement, wash out dust and other foreign bodies, give nutrition and oxygen to the cornea, and prevent infection. When there are not enough tears, eyes become irritated, painful, infected, scarred and eventually blind.

Tear production is measured with a Schirmer Tear Test (STT)

1. Normal tear production >15mm tears per minute
2. Early Stage KCS <15mm tears per minute
3. Intermediate Stage KCS <10mm tears per minute
4. Advanced Stage KCS <5mm tears per minute
5. End Stage KCS 0mm tears per minute

Dry eye is treated with immuno-modulators to help stop destruction of the tear cells (most often this is Cyclosporine drops or ointments), artificial tears (best to have Hyaluronan in these drops), periodic antibiotics and pain relief.

Any increase in discharge, pain, blinking, or colour change to eye surface should prompt you to contact your vet clinic so that treatment can be modified.

**We recommend 3 monthly check ups for Dry Eye to monitor the condition of the eyes.
Early detection of changes and worsening will help to prevent nasty eye ulcers from developing.**