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## CANINE ANTERIOR UVEITIS

Anterior uveitis is inflammation that affects the front or anterior part of the inside of the eye, called the uvea. The posterior (or back) part of the eye may or may not be affected.

The causes of anterior uveitis include:

- Infections from viruses, parasites, fungi, bacteria tick-borne disease
- Immune-mediated conditions, where the body attacks its own tissues
- Cancers
- Trauma to the eye
- Metabolic disease elsewhere in the body that is affecting the eye
- Idiopathic, which means the cause is unknown
- Lens-induced, which is caused by the escape of the lens protein into the eye fluid and is associated with cataracts or penetrating injury

Anterior uveitis can be painful for your pet and may threaten vision. Just as important, this problem can also be a sign of a disease that is affecting the rest of the pet's body.

What to Watch For:

- Redness
- Tearing and/or squinting
- A small or unevenly shaped pupil
- A cloudy appearance in the front of the eye
- An unevenly colored iris

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## Diagnosis

Diagnostic tests are needed to identify anterior uveitis and exclude other diseases. Immune-mediated disease may be difficult to diagnosis if they are confined only to the eye. All other causes of uveitis must be excluded first.

Tests may include:

- Medical history and physical examination
- A complete examination of the eye
- Tonometry to measure the pressure within the eye
- General blood tests, such as a complete blood count (CBC) and serum biochemical profile
- Specific blood tests for immune diseases, infectious agents or other systemic diseases
- Ultrasound, x-rays or aspirates, which are samples of fluid or cells

Treatments for anterior uveitis may include symptomatic, specific therapy and/or surgery:

- Symptomatic therapy, regardless of the cause, is indicated. Topical treatments and medications taken by mouth are designed to reduce pain and inflammation-like treating a headache with aspirin regardless of what is causing the headache. Some patients will require long-term therapy to prevent recurrence of the uveitis.
- Specific therapy is directed if a cause for the anterior uveitis has been determined.
- Surgery may be necessary in situations where a tumor or secondary complications (such as glaucoma) are present and cannot be controlled with medications. The type of surgery will depend on the specific problem.

## Home Care

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It is important that you follow the treatment instructions and learn to medicate your pet properly. It is not always easy to put medications into an animal's eye, but it is imperative that the medications be given. The follow-up appointments are important to be sure the medication is controlling the disease.