Cleaning Your Dog's Eyes, How to

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Eyes are very delicate but surprisingly durable. There are steps you can take now to care for your pet's eyes so they aren't prone to infections and traumas later. One thing that is all-important is observing your pet's eyes, so you can catch any problem early and prevent it.

Infections of the eye are usually caused by bacteria and are treated with antibiotic ointment or solutions. The most common infection of the eye is also the easiest to detect: conjunctivitis. Symptoms of conjunctivitis include redness around the eye and a yellow or greenish discharge.

Other eye infections can be caused from trauma, foreign bodies in the eye or eyelash abnormalities. Eyelash abnormalities are usually genetic and cause the eyelashes to scrape against the cornea, thus causing ulceration and infection.

Preventing infection can be as easy as keeping your pet's eyes clean. Here are some steps to follow to prevent infections from happening.

1. Trim hair from around your pet's eyes using blunt-nosed scissors. Keeping hair from scraping on the eye will help prevent bacteria from getting into the eye.
2. By making sure the corners of your pet's eyes are mucus-free you may be able to prevent infections. Bacteria often feed on mucus and can migrate into the eye. Using sterile veterinary eyewash like Eye Clens® Eye Wash is a convenient way to do this.
3. Make sure to use protective ophthalmic ointment before you apply insecticides or before bathing your pet. This can prevent eye irritations that can lead to infection.
4. Keep your pet from situations where he may get eye trauma. Fights with other animals, exposure to irritating substances and letting your pet hang his head out of the car windows are three preventable situations when your pet could receive eye trauma.
5. Tear stains are also an area that may become a hotbed for bacteria. Some dogs, such as Poodles, Cockers, and small Terriers, don't have the proper mechanism for draining the tears out of the lacrimal gland (tear duct). The excess tears spill down the lower eyelid causing unsightly staining. Trimming hair around the eye, keeping the eye clean, and using a tear stain remover like Show Eyes® Solution or Pads can all help.

Your veterinarian also may have suggestions for you and your particular animal. Observation and prevention are a great way to keep veterinary bills within reason, and eye care is no exception.

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