Eye Care for Dogs FAQs

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FAQs

eye care for dogs

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Why does my dog have brownish stains below his eyes?

On many light colored dogs, especially miniature and toy breeds, we may see a brown or pink stain on the skin and hair below the inside corner of the eye. This is a common cosmetic problem caused by an overflow of tears onto the cheeks. The color change of the hair and skin occurs when the normal bacteria on the hair and skin react with the clear tears.

In normal animals, tears are constantly produced and drain out through small ducts in the eyelids. The ducts empty into the nose. (That is why your nose runs when you cry.) In animals with blocked ducts, the tears overflow the lids and run down the face.

There are several causes of the overflow of tears. Miniature breeds and Persians often have more prominent eyes. This stretches the

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eyelid and may cut off the drainage system. This is the most common cause and there is little we can do to correct it. Some animals are born with an abnormal drainage system that may or may not be surgically correctable. Sometimes, the eyelids turn inward and block the drainage. This is also surgically correctable.

Hair can act like a wick, drawing the tears out of the eye. This can be corrected by removing the offending hair. In some cases, tear overflow may be due to excessive tear formation caused by irritation of the eye by a particle of something in the eye, an allergy, or an abnormal eyelid or eyelash which turns inward and rubs against the surface of the eye.
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Why do I need to keep my dog's eyes clean?
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. If you see these signs, have your dog examined by a veterinarian. To help prevent infections, use a sterile eyewash such as Eye Clens® Eye Wash, to keep the area around your dog's eye clean.
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My dog's fur gets in his eyes. Do I have to worry about that?
Scratches to the cornea (the clear membrane across the surface of the eye) can result from contact with hair. Use a blunt-nosed scissors, cutting parallel to the edge of the eyelid.
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How do I protect my dog's eyes when I am shampooing, or applying flea dips?
There are several products that protect your dog's eyes when they might get irritated such as when you bathe him or apply insecticide to his head. A protective ophthalmic ointment protects eyes from potentially harmful chemicals and detergents found in many soaps and shampoos that could enter your dog's eyes, causing irritation.
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Should I let my dog stick his head out of the window when I am driving?
We definitely recommend you do NOT allow your pet to travel with his head out of the window for several reasons:

- Small particles could enter your

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dog's eyes or ears causing severe injury. Larger objects such as tree branches hanging onto a street, or road construction signs could also cause injury to a dog whose head is outside of the vehicle.

If the dog's head can get outside of the window, chances are his whole body can. We have seen dogs jump or fall out of open windows of vehicles and become seriously injured or worse.

- Should you be involved in an accident, a dog with his head outside of the window could, again, be seriously injured or even killed.
- We recommend that animals riding in a vehicle be in a cage, crate, traveling harness, or otherwise restrained.

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How do I clean my dog's eyes and help prevent 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 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, or letting your pet hang his head out of the car windows are three preventable situations when your pet could receive eye trauma.

5. Tearstains are also an area that may become a hotbed for bacteria. Some dogs, such as Poodles, Cockers, and small terriers, may not have the proper mechanism for draining the tears out of the lacrimal gland (tear duct).

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The excess tears spill down the lower eyelid causing unsightly staining. Trimming hair around the eye, keeping the eye clean, and using a tearstain remover such as Show Eyes® Solution or Pads can all help.

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