

Is your dog or cat at risk for blindness and chronic pain?

Glaucoma is a disorder of the fluid movement within the eye. Normal eyes produce fluid continuously which drains through a natural filter located by the front outside edge of the iris. If this filter becomes clogged or closes, fluid does not leave the eye normally and pressure increases. This is the definition of glaucoma, increased intraocular pressure. Glaucoma has two detrimental effects for the patient: blindness and chronic pain.

Blindness due to glaucoma is usually irreversible. The key to preventing blindness is recognizing glaucoma before the pressure is so high that it irreversibly damages the retina. Pressures can easily be checked through the use of a Tonopen. Once blindness has occurred, the patient can still be chronically painful. Treatment at that point is aimed at alleviating pain.

Any dog or cat can get glaucoma for different reasons. Some breeds of dogs and cats are prone to glaucoma:

Afgan hound, Akita, Alaskan malamute, Basset hound, Beagle, Border collie, Boston terrier, Bouvier des Flandres, Cairn terrier, Cardigan welsh corgi, Chihuahua, Chow, Cocker spaniel, Dachshund, Dalmatian, Dandie Dinmont terrier, English Springer spaniel, Giant Schnauzer, Great Dane, Maltese, Manchester terrier, Miniature pinscher, Norfolk terrier, Norwegian elkhound, Norwich terrier, Pembroke Welsh corgi, Poodle, Saluki, Samoyed, Scottish terrier, Sealyham terrier, Shih tzu, Siberian husky, Skye terror, Smooth-coated fox terrier, Tibetan terrier, Welsh Springer spaniel, Welsh terrier, West Highland white terrier, Whippet, and Wire-haired fox terrier.

Also any dog or cat that has had trauma to the eye or an infection that involved the eye may be prone to glaucoma later in life.

We recommend checking eye pressures yearly to hopefully catch it before permanent blindness and to alleviate chronic pain for the pet.