

# Dry Eye and your dog

## What is Dry Eye?

Also known as Kerato-conjunctivitis Sicca, Dry Eye is an immune-mediated condition which results in destruction of the glands which produce the tears. Tears are vital in maintaining the health of the eye and especially the cornea—the clear window at the front of the eye.

If tear production slows or stops, the cornea becomes dry, sticky and painful. Bacteria are no longer washed away, ulcers become much more likely and if left untreated, blindness can result.



## How is it diagnosed and treated?

Dry Eye is diagnosed and monitored using the 'Schirmer Tear Test'. This is a quick and simple test using impregnated strips of absorbent paper.

Artificial tears can be helpful in maintaining a moist and comfortable eye, especially during the early stages of treatment, if ulcers are present, or in cases too advanced to respond to more specific treatment.

We recommend an ointment called 'Optimmune', which suppresses the abnormal inflammatory response within the tear gland and allows normal tear production to resume.

## Long Term Treatment

Your pet will have this condition for the rest of their life. Treatment and monitoring is therefore also life-long. Optimmune is an effective treatment which suppresses the abnormal immune reaction within the tear gland. It is applied twice a day to both eyes, even if tear production is only reduced in one eye. Only a small amount of ointment is needed—one tube should last 4-6 weeks if used correctly.

Always use Optimmune twice a day.

We will need to test your dog's eyes 2-4 weeks after the start of treatment and then every 3-6 months.

Some breeds of dog are at higher risk from this condition. Free Schirmer Tear Tests are available for West Highland White Terriers, Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, Shih Tzus, Cocker Spaniels, Bulldogs, Pugs and Pekingese.

