

Cherry Eye

What is it?

A pink, reddish mass protrudes between the globe (eyeball) and the third eyelid.

What causes it?

Cherry eye is caused by the third eyelid gland prolapse (slipping from its usual position). It is also called Haws syndrome. It may be caused by a weakness of the connective tissue which attaches the base of the gland to periorbital structures (tissue around the eyeball).



Signs & Symptoms

Cherry eye is a round, smooth, red mass that appears at the medial canthus (inner corner) of the eye. It protrudes over the free margin of the third eyelid and may be unilateral (one eye) or bilateral (both eyes).

Testing

Physical examination is performed. The condition is easily visible.

Treatment:

Surgery is required to permanently repair a cherry eye. The gland is anchored to the orbital periosteum (connective tissue which anchors to bone). Next a pocket is made under the conjunctiva of the third eyelid. The prolapsed gland is then attached to the cartilage of the third eyelid. Excision (removal) of the gland is contraindicated. It may cause decreased tear production and permanent dry eye.

This information is not meant to be a substitute for veterinary care.

Always follow the instructions provided by your veterinarian.

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