

PROPTOSIS

Your pet has been diagnosed with a proptosed globe, which is a forward displacement of the eyeball. The condition occurs most frequently in breeds with prominent eyes such as the Pekingese, Shih Tzu, and Lhasa Apso, and usually occurs as a result of trauma to the head (blunt trauma or animal fights). Proptosis is an ocular emergency and the sooner the condition is treated, the better the prognosis will be. Unfortunately, sometimes even early and aggressive treatment fails to save a proptosed eye.

There are several structures in and around the eye that can be potentially damaged by a proptosed globe. The optic nerve extends from the back of the eye to the brain, and is strained when the eye is proptosed forward. Additionally, the muscles responsible for moving the eye can be damaged (ruptured). Blood inside the eye (hyphema) or a dilated pupil indicate further damage. In some cases, it is obvious to the ophthalmologist that the eye and or/vision will not be recovered with treatment, and enucleation (eye removal) surgery is the only option. In other cases, surgery to replace the globe in the orbit is recommended because there is a fair chance the eye and/or vision can be saved.

After the globe is replaced, the eyelids are sutured together to hold the eye in place. After two weeks, the sutures are removed and the health of the eye is evaluated. If the eye is in the orbit and comfortable but blind, further surgery should not be necessary. However, if the eye is still protruding from the orbit, enucleation surgery may be recommended. The prognosis for vision is usually guarded to poor in most cases due to optic nerve damage.