

## UVEITIS

Uveitis refers to an inflammation (irritation) of the part of the eye that supplies blood to the eye. If the eye is to remain clear so that light rays can focus on the back of the eye, the blood vessels must be located out of the way of the clear structures such as the cornea and lens. When the blood vessels become irritated, blood cells and debris leak out and result in cloudiness. Clinical signs of uveitis include: cloudiness, redness, tearing, squinting, bleeding into the eye, and loss of vision.

There are many causes of uveitis such as trauma or cataract formation. Many types of infections and tumors can cause uveitis in the dog and cat. Some of the infections in dogs include: Rocky Mountain spotted fever, infected uterus in females, hepatitis virus, and systemic fungal infections. In cats the causes can include: feline leukemia virus, feline AIDS virus, FIP virus, and Toxoplasmosis. However, many patients with uveitis DO NOT have an obvious underlying cause. We evaluate the entire patient to decide whether specific laboratory testing is necessary to search for a cause of the uveitis.

Golden Retrievers develop an aggressive type of uveitis. “Golden Retriever Uveitis Syndrome” is usually present in both eyes, is often a chronic, long-term concern, and is more likely than other types of uveitis to lead to secondary eye problems. Patients with this type of uveitis often need oral anti-inflammatory medications to control the inflammation.

Uveitis can result in several eye complications such as cataract formation, scar tissue, retina disease, and glaucoma. Treatment for this disease is aimed at reducing the inflammation and preventing the complications. The treatment protocol will vary for each patient but may include a steroid eye medicine to decrease the inflammation, an oral non-steroidal or steroidal medication to decrease inflammation, and possibly medicine to treat glaucoma.

Changes can happen very quickly in patients with uveitis and you should not hesitate to call us with new information about your pet’s eye. This disease can easily result in permanent blindness.