

Cherry Eye



Cherry eye, otherwise known as prolapsed tear gland appears as a red swelling in the corner of the eyeball of an affected dog, about the size of a cherry, hence the name cherry eye. The tear gland normally attaches to the undersurface of the eyeball by a ligament, which holds this gland in place, and out of sight. In affected breeds, this ligament is either weak or nonexistent, which then results in the gland "popping out" and appearing in the corner of the eyeball.

Aside from appearance, the prolapsed tear gland can actually rub against the surface of the eye known as the cornea, and cause irritation, and sometimes ulceration of the cornea. Excessive drainage from the affected eye is sometimes seen. This gland also belongs inside and not exposed.

The required treatment is having the gland sutured, stitched or "tacked" back into place. Years ago, and some veterinarians still, are removing this gland as a form of treatment. If the gland is removed and the patient develops dry eye, long term medication is required then to keep the eyeball moist as this gland is responsible for the tear production in the eyeball. Thus, this procedure should never be considered as an option even though it is cheaper.