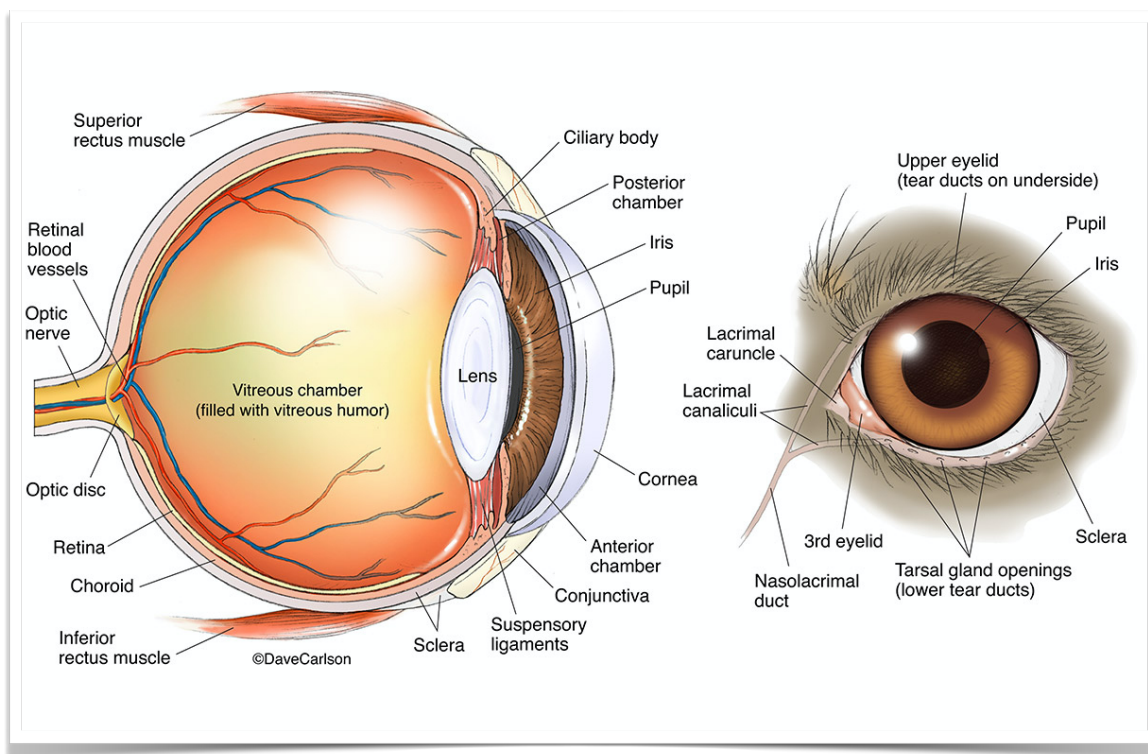


# THE BLIND AND PAINFUL EYE

## Surgical Options for the Painful Blind Eye



## What if my pet has lost vision and the eye is painful?

The blind and painful eye is an unfortunate, but somewhat common problem for veterinary patients. Our primary goal for these patients is to eliminate the source of discomfort in order to maintain a good quality of life. There are three main surgical options that we may discuss with you for your pet. The specific options available for your pet depend on the specific medical aspects of your pet's eye condition, as well as emotional, financial and logistical considerations. The goal for all of these options is to maintain long term comfort with a high likelihood of success. Some of these options may not be available/recommended for your pet ie. an intraocular tumor where enucleation (removal of the entire eye) is the best option for cure.

## Evisceration with Intrasccleral Prosthesis (ISP)

**Evisceration with placement of an intrasccleral prosthesis is a more cosmetic alternative to complete eye removal (enucleation) and maintains the most normal cosmetic appearance for your pet.** This surgery is a great option for pets with a relatively healthy cornea and usually requires less than one hour of general anesthesia time. During this procedure, the internal contents of the eye are removed leaving the outer shell (sclera, cornea, and extraocular muscles) intact. A silicon prosthesis is implanted within the outer shell and then the sclera (outer shell) is sutured



closed. Since the extraocular muscles remain attached, the prosthetic eye will move and blink in unison with the opposite eye.

After surgery, your pet will need to wear an elizabethan collar for about 2 weeks after surgery to prevent rubbing. The eye will go through some color changes like a bruise as part of the normal healing process, but the eye should always remain comfortable. Initially the eye will appear red as blood fills the extra space. The eye will gradually change over the 6 week healing period to a final appearance of a cloudy eye (as above). We usually recheck pets 2 weeks and 6 weeks after surgery to monitor the healing process. The intrasccleral prosthesis is comfortable long term and is maintained just like a “normal” eye because the outer shell of the eye is living tissue.

## Enucleation (removal of the entire eye)

In this procedure, the entire eye, conjunctiva, and eyelid margins are removed and the eyelid skin is permanently sutured closed. A silicone prosthesis is often placed in the orbit (eye socket) to fill the space in order to prevent a “sunken” appearance. This procedure also requires less than one hour of anesthesia time. **This surgery is usually the best option if we suspect there is a tumor (cancer) or infection within the eye or if there has been a significant injury to the eye.**

Enucleation can also be performed by your regular veterinarian, but placement of the orbital implant is typically only performed by veterinary ophthalmologists.

After surgery, your pet will need to wear an elizabethan collar for 1 week after surgery to prevent rubbing. Usually, your pet will be completely healed in 10-14 days. Once the hair regrows around the orbit the appearance will be that of a closed or winking eye.



## Chemical Cycloablation (Intravitreal Injection)

**This option requires only brief anesthesia which may be preferred for elderly or systemically ill patients who cannot tolerate prolonged anesthesia.**

During this procedure, a small amount of fluid is removed from the eye and replaced with an antibiotic medication (Gentamicin) which destroys the fluid producing structure in the eye. The reduced fluid production within the eye will reduce eye pressure resulting in a comfortable eye. This procedure is also toxic to the retina, so permanent blindness will result if it was not already present.

This procedure has a 75% success rate at controlling the eye pressure long term. There is a 25% chance that the procedure does not adequately control comfort and would need to be repeated or a different procedure would need to be performed. Occasionally, patients can develop bleeding inside of the eye. This can happen anytime after the procedure and the eye will appear red inside. This is generally not painful and usually resolves over several weeks. There is also a chance of generalized shrinking of the eye (phthisis bulbi), but the eye usually remains comfortable and no treatment is required.

Following this procedure, you may be asked to continue topical therapy until the eye pressure has stabilized. The typical post-operative recheck is scheduled 4-6 weeks after the procedure.



The smaller eye has received a Chemical Cycloablation