

MACROBLEPHARON

What is macroblepharon?

This is a condition with excessive eyelid length and a protruding eye leading to progressive disease of the surface of the eye (the cornea).

What causes macroblepharon?

This disease is commonly seen in brachycephalic (short-nosed) breeds which include; Pug, French Bulldog, English Bulldog, Pekingese, Lhasa apso, Shih Tzu, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Boston Terriers and Chihuahuas. The condition can be exacerbated by a large fold of skin across the top of the nose.

What are the signs of macroblepharon?

This will depend on the severity of the disease. Often the 'white of the eye' (the sclera) can be seen to a greater extent and the eye may be protuberant (bulge forwards).

In severe cases the cornea will suffer with excessive exposure and this can result in scar tissue formation, and pigmentation (brown discolouration). If left untreated the cornea may develop an ulcer (see Corneal Ulceration Factsheet) and we will look carefully for any abnormal hairs which may be in contact with the surface of the eye. Chronic cases may have impaired vision with extensive opacification of the corneal surface.

Can both eyes be affected?

Yes in the majority of cases both eyes are affected, but the severity of the disease may be different between eyes.

What are the treatment options for macroblepharon?

The severity of the condition can be assessed by a Veterinary Ophthalmologist and the treatment will be tailored to the individual.

We will often recommend medial blepharoplasty surgery, which reduces the eyelid length and prevents the continued abrasion of the surface of the eye. Entropion surgery may be carried out at the same time (see Entropion Factsheet) if the eyelid turns inwards.

Over the last decade Veterinary Vision has been developed a technique to remove the corneal pigmentation using a specialised laser. The laser surgery removes the pigment without damaging the rest of the cornea and can be very successful in improving vision in severely affected dogs.

Will my dog look different after surgery?

The surgery brings the eyelids together near to the nose to shorten the eyelid opening. This fits the eyelids more closely around the eye and the eyes appear to bulge less. The eyes may appear smaller and further apart but in the majority of cases the surgery does not significantly affect the overall appearance.

