

# PAROTID DUCT TRANSPOSITION (PDT) SURGERY

## What is Dry Eye?

Dry Eye is also known as keratoconjunctivitis sicca (KCS) and is a condition that develops due to a lack of tear production. See Dry Eye Factsheet.

## What is a parotid duct transposition (PDT) surgery?

The parotid duct carries saliva from a gland near to the ear to a small opening in the mouth, close to the last tooth in the upper jaw.

In PDT surgery the parotid duct is diverted towards the eye so that the saliva will provide a natural source of lubrication. The surgery is performed through two small incisions – one in the mouth, and one inside the lower eyelid. The parotid gland is one of many salivary glands so diverting it will not lead to dryness in the mouth.

## Why is PDT surgery recommended?

The majority of cases of dry eye can be managed with medicated drops. In a small proportion of patients, medical therapy is unsuccessful. This is usually the result of severe damage to the tear gland with a loss of function, or because they have never fully developed from birth (congenital KCS).

## What happens after surgery?

Following PDT surgery, patients will have small dissolvable sutures (stiches) inside the lower eyelid and mouth. There are not normally any visible sutures in the skin but all dogs must wear an Elizabethan (cone) collar for 10-14 days after surgery to avoid self-trauma. We may prescribe a combination of oral and topical medication post-operatively. .

Following surgery, the eye will be lubricated by saliva which is produced in response to feeding. Dogs that have had PDT surgery may develop wetting around the eye when offered food. We may suggest feeding smaller meals more frequently through the day to maintain a steady flow of saliva, especially in the week after surgery

## What are the possible complications?

The most common long-term complication is excessive wetness. Saliva will stain light-coloured fur an orange-brown colour. Chronic saliva excessive wetting can potentially cause irritation to the skin, particularly in dogs with heavily furred or folded faces, or in patients with underlying skin problems. Slight alterations to feeding regimes can be used to adjust saliva flow to the eye.

Saliva contains more minerals than tears which can leave deposits on the ocular surface. We may suggest specific diets or additives to food to try to mineral composition of your dog's saliva.

It is possible for the parotid duct to become blocked with scar tissue formation or with mineral deposits. In this situation, you may notice a sudden dryness to the eye that does not improve with feeding, and we may suggest further surgery to unblock the duct.

## What will happen if we don't do PDT surgery?

Parotid duct transposition is normally only advised in patients for whom medical treatment is not possible or effective. If the decision is made not to proceed with surgery, we may prescribe frequent daily topical lubricants in addition to other topical medication. This may help to control the associated corneal and conjunctival inflammation, but there is likely be a progressive loss of corneal clarity and vision.

## My pet is insured, how do I make a claim?

If your pet is insured, we will require you to pay for consultation fees and to then claim them back under the insurance. For operations we may be able to arrange a direct claim whereby you do not need to pay at the time and the insurance company pays the fees directly to us. However, direct claims can only be arranged for operations, and only with pre-authorisation from your insurance company. Direct claims can only be processed once the claim form for the initial consultation has been submitted and approved. If you need any assistance regarding insurance, please contact our experienced administration team with your policy details.