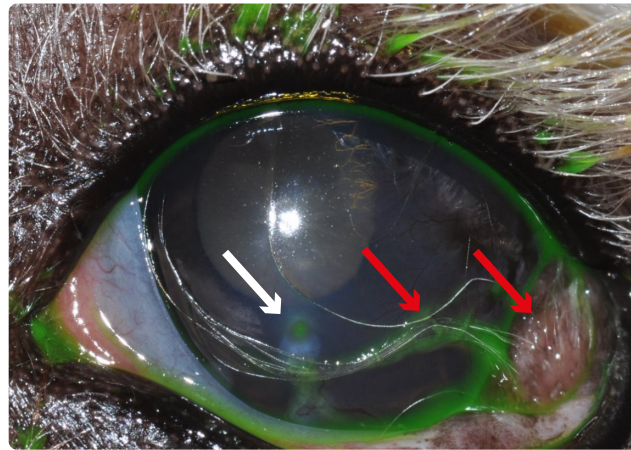


## Dermoid



### What is a dermoid?

A dermoid is a misplaced 'lump' of often hairy skin, in an abnormal location on the surface of the eyeball or eyelid. There is no known cause for dermoids but we are suspicious that it is inherited and some breeds are more commonly affected – such as the French Bulldog. In the picture below, you see a hairy dermoid (red arrow) that has rubbed on the cornea and caused scarring and an ulcer (white arrow). Dermoids can be found on the cornea (clear window of the eye), on the eyelids, or on both.



Above a photo of a conjunctival dermoid (on the right hand side of the photo). Note the hairs crossing over the surface of the eye. A green dye has been placed in the eye to highlight these hairs and check for the presence of corneal ulcers.

Dermoids are something a dog is born with but they often are small first and not detected until puppy and eyeball have grown to a reasonable size. Dermoids affecting the eyelids may be more obvious than those on the cornea. Small dermoids may just be a cosmetic issue but in larger dermoids, or when there is hair growth from the dermoid to the cornea, corneal irritation and damage may occur. Pain and vision loss are possible complications in this case. We therefore recommend removal of the dermoid if the lesion is large (affects vision) or if hair contacts the cornea surface).

### What does the surgery involve?

Dermoids are excised under general anaesthesia with the use of an operating microscope. Usually we would leave the tissue underneath to heal by itself but if the dermoid is very deep a graft may be needed to stabilise the eye.

### What will my dog's eye look like immediately after surgery?

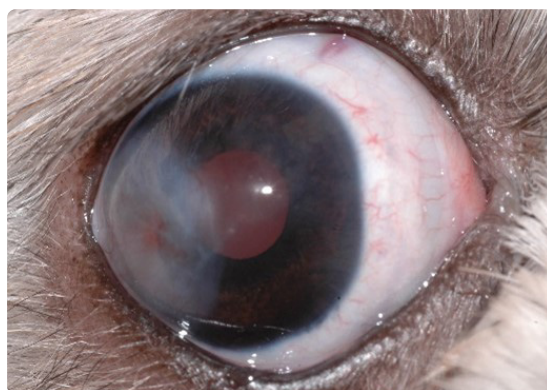
After surgery, your dog may be a little squinty but most patients are remarkably comfortable right away. Over the next couple of weeks, the area where the dermoid was excised will be slowly covered with a healing response. This can look concerning, as the blood vessels that grow in will make the eye look very red. However, this is a welcome progress and within a short while, the healing tissue will clear.



Above left: corneal dermoid in a young SBT before surgery. Above right: the same eye 2 weeks after surgery. The area, where the dermoid has been removed is now covered partially with blood vessels which promote healing. Once the entire defect has been covered with blood vessels, the area will clear.

## What will my dog's eye will look like in the long-term?

In the long-term there may be some scarring or pigmentation in the area of the dermoid but the dermoid cannot grow back if it has been removed properly. Vision either stays good or is improved in dermoid surgery as in the patient below, where you can now see the pupil after the dermoid has been removed.



Above left: corneal dermoid in a Shih Tzu before surgery. Above right: the same eye 6 weeks after surgery. The area, where the dermoid has been removed has healed over but some scarring is still present. This will reduce further over the next few months, only mild scarring is expected to remain.

## What are risks of dermoid removal surgery?

As with any operation, there are some risks, but fortunately these are very small.

- Anaesthetic risks: every general anaesthetic carries a small risk but we minimise this with optimal monitoring and staff trained by our anaesthesia specialist.
- During the operation: for corneal dermoids, corneal perforation is a small risk as we have to cut very deep to remove most corneal dermoids. However, we can repair corneal perforations should one occur.
- Post-operatively, there is a small risk of infection and delayed wound healing – but this is extremely rare and again something we can usually manage with some additional medical treatment.
- Re-growth of dermoid hair: This should not occur if the hair follicles have been adequately removed.

