



## Glaucoma

### Diagnostic Plan

History  
Physical examination  
Ocular examination  
Measurement of intraocular pressure

### Therapeutic Plan

Drugs that relieve intraocular pressure

### Nutritional Plan

Nutrition based on individual patient evaluation including body condition and other organ system involvement or disease

## Glaucoma

Your pet has glaucoma. Glaucoma is an increase in pressure within the eyeball. If left untreated, glaucoma damages structures within the eye, causing blindness. In animals and people, glaucoma is treated with drugs, surgery, or both. This client education sheet will help you learn more about glaucoma and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

### What You Should Know About Glaucoma

The front part of the eye – from the cornea to the lens – is filled with a fluid called aqueous humor. Aqueous humor is produced continuously by the eye. This production is offset by continuous reabsorption of aqueous humor into the blood stream through an area of the eye known as the drainage, or filtration angle. The delicate balance between production and reabsorption of aqueous humor maintains the normal size and shape of the eye. Glaucoma, an increase in pressure within the eye, results when there is normal production but decreased outflow of aqueous humor.

#### Causes

Three types of glaucoma are recognized in dogs and cats: congenital, primary, and secondary. Congenital glaucoma is caused by developmental malformations of the eye.

Primary glaucoma occurs when no abnormalities exist in the eye that could have caused the increased pressure. Primary glaucoma may be hereditary. It's important to realize that primary glaucoma usually develops in both eyes.

Secondary glaucoma follows some sort of eye abnormality or trauma to the eye. This is the most common type of glaucoma seen in most veterinary practices. Conditions that may precede secondary glaucoma are displacement of the lens, cataracts, eye surgery, foreign objects that have penetrated the eye, eye tumors, and infections.

## Diagnosis

Glaucoma is difficult to diagnose before the signs of chronic disease appear. Examination of the eyes by your veterinarian for changes in the lens, cornea, iris, and retina may suggest the presence of glaucoma. The diagnosis is confirmed by demonstrating an increase in pressure within the eyeball using special instruments.

## Treatment and Home Care

Therapeutic goals include reducing the pressure within the eye and, if possible, preserving vision. Medications, often in the form of eye drops, can be used to decrease production of aqueous humor and to increase its outflow from the eye.

Surgery is often needed to remove a displaced lens or tumor that causes glaucoma or to increase the outflow or decrease the formation of aqueous humor when medications are ineffective. In some instances, it is necessary to remove the eye if the pet's vision is lost and its eyeball is greatly enlarged or painful.

Home care for pets with glaucoma includes strict compliance with your veterinarian's instructions. All medications must be given daily as indicated. Glaucoma that doesn't result from a cause such as tumors or eye injuries will usually affect both eyes. You will need to be alert for early signs of glaucoma in your pet's normal eye.

## Dietary Plan

After treatment for glaucoma has begun, your veterinarian may suggest a dietary change based on your pet's age and body condition, and on the presence or absence of disease in other organs and body systems. Optimal nutrition provides for a pet's needs based on age and activity level, but more importantly, reduces the health risks associated with feeding excess sodium, calcium, phosphorus, protein, and calories. Foods that avoid these harmful excesses and provide proper nutrition for each life stage include the Hill's® Science Diet® brand of pet foods for dogs and cats.

## Nutritional Plan

After your pet's recovery from a corneal ulcer is complete, your veterinarian may suggest a dietary change based on your pet's age and body condition, and on the presence or absence of disease in other organs and body systems. Optimal nutrition provides for a pet's needs based on age and activity level, but more important, reduces the health risks associated with feeding excess sodium, phosphorus, calcium, protein, and calories. Foods that avoid these harmful excesses and provide proper nutrition for each life stage include the Hill's® Science Diet® brand of pet foods for dogs and cats.

## Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). However, do not add water to your cat's food. Feed only the recommended diet. Do not feed additional salt or any snacks that may contain sodium. Be patient but firm with your pet.

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## Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Nutritional Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.