

# Canine Uveitis

## Ophthalmology Service



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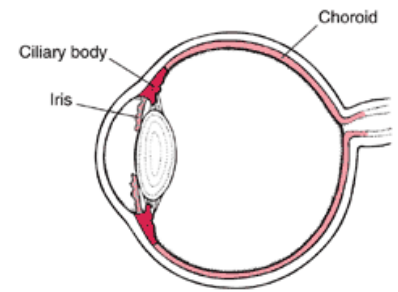
29080 Inkster Rd.  
Southfield, MI 48034  
(248) 354-6660

3412 E. Walton Blvd.  
Auburn Hills, MI 48326  
(248) 371-3713

1425 Michigan St. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 284-5300

### What is Uveitis?

*Uveitis* is inflammation of some portion of the uveal tract of the eye, which consists of the iris, ciliary body, and choroid. The term *anterior uveitis* refers to inflammation of the iris and ciliary body only, and the term *posterior uveitis* refers to inflammation of the choroid. *Panuveitis* refers to inflammation of all of these structures.



### Diagnosis of Uveitis

The clinical signs listed above, along with a low intraocular pressure, will assist your veterinarian in making the diagnosis of uveitis. The more difficult task is defining the cause. A thorough systemic evaluation, including a physical exam, Complete Blood Count (CBC), Chemistry panel, and urinalysis should be completed to rule out causes of uveitis listed below. Additional diagnostic tests (clotting times, chest x-rays, titers for specific diseases) should be performed as determined by your veterinarian.

### Clinical Signs of Uveitis

- Excessive tearing
- Excessive squinting
- Light sensitivity
- Conjunctivitis
- Corneal edema (blue haze to the eye)
- Decreased vision
- Color change to the iris (usually darker)
- Miotic (constricted) pupil

### Causes of Uveitis in the Dog

Uveitis may be caused by a variety of systemic infections, including bacterial disease, fungal disease, viral disease, or protozoal disease. Uveitis is also commonly associated with cataracts (which are commonly seen in diabetic patients). Trauma to the lens or anterior chamber of the eye will also induce inflammation and uveitis. Other causes include vasculitis, radiation therapy, cancer, systemic hypertension, and uveodermatologic syndrome. It is important to remember that the cause of the uveitis may not always be able to be identified, and is thus termed *idiopathic*.

### Treatment of Uveitis

The goals of treatment of uveitis are to reduce the intraocular inflammation and to maintain vision in the eye.

The inflammation in the eye should be treated with topical anti-inflammatory eye drops. Topical atropine should also be used to keep the pupil dilated and alleviate pain. It is important to know that treatment may be lifelong.

Systemic therapy, if necessary, should be tailored based on the patient and the suspected cause of the uveitis. Your veterinarian will decide if other drugs (e.g. oral antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, anti-fungals, etc.) are necessary.

### Potential Complications

If not diagnosed in a timely manner, or if left untreated, uveitis can lead to very serious problems. Cataract formation, lens luxation, glaucoma, phthisis bulbi (shrinkage of the globe) and blindness are all potential complications of uveitis.