

Glaucoma and Your Pet

Big news in our corner of the veterinary world! Due to some incredibly generous folks, John and Georgia Storm (our dedicated supporters from day one) and Linnette Storms and her special kitty “Georgia” (talk about serendipity), we are now the proud owners of a TonoPen-Vet tonometer. This medical tool will measure the pressure of the fluid inside your pet’s eyes with just a touch.

This is important primarily to diagnose glaucoma, which is the leading cause of blindness in dogs. It also occurs in cats, especially Persians and Siamese. With glaucoma, the normal fluid inside the eye does not drain correctly, and as a result, the pressure inside the eye rises. This can happen slowly over time or as quickly as in a couple of hours. If not caught in time, this rise in pressure can damage the retina and the optic nerve leading to blindness.

The warning signs of glaucoma are:

- pain—characterized by loss of appetite, depression, or pawing at the eye
- a dilated pupil
- cloudiness within the cornea
- red or bloodshot eye
- loss of vision

There are medical and surgical therapies for treating glaucoma, but early detection is key. There are two types of glaucoma. Primary glaucoma is inherited. Certain breeds have physical traits that predispose them to glaucoma. This usually doesn’t develop until 2 to 3 years of age or older. Secondary glaucoma occurs when other eye diseases or injuries cause decreased fluid drainage. Some common causes are inflammation inside the eye, bleeding inside the eye, or dislocation of the lens.

Some breeds at risk for glaucoma*:

Beagle

Dachshund

Poodle

Border Collie

English Springer

Scottish Terrier

Cairn Terrier

Maltese

Shih Tzu

Chihuahua

Manchester Terrier

Tibetan Terrier

Cocker Spaniel

Miniature Pinscher

West Highland Terrier

Corgi

Norwich Terrier

Wired-Hair Fox Terrier

*A complete list of breeds is available upon request.

Every dog and cat should have a baseline pressure reading with our new Tonopen. Please call 367-4701 to make an appointment or if you have any questions.

See you soon,

“Dr. Mae”