



Lucy W. 2 years post op cataract surgery

When Is Surgery Indicated?

Once a cataract has progressed to involve over 50-60% of the once clear lens, vision begins to be significantly compromised. It is desirable to remove cataracts before they are totally cloudy, if possible, to decrease the chance of cataract induced inflammation that can lead to potential complications, some of which can be significant. Do not wait until your pet is totally blind.

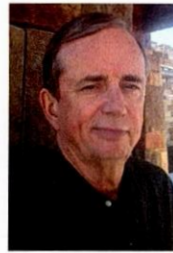
Surgery has been performed successfully on dogs and cats between 6 months and 18 years of age. The pet's general health is evaluated before cataract surgery by your referring veterinarian.

Although Murray was only 4 years old, his cataracts came on suddenly, due to diabetes. He never had time to adjust to the loss of sight, so he was disoriented and confused quite often, especially in low light. As soon as he had surgery he was back to normal as if nothing had happened and it has made his quality of life so much better, for years to come. Thank you again for everything you have done for our baby boy.

— John F.

My ten year old lab now runs and wrestles with my other dogs like she was a puppy. The difference is night and day comparing it before and after cataract surgery. It has made a huge improvement in her life.

— Betsy M.



Robert M. Gwin, D.V.M., M.S.
*Diplomate, American College Of
Veterinary Ophthalmologists*

Animal Eye Clinic

Oklahoma City

2915 Northwest 122nd Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
(405) 751-3821
(800) 258-6454

Tulsa

4005 South 102nd East Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74146
(918) 632-0508
1-800-256-6454



This brochure does not, in any way, describe or dictate a standard of care. Its purpose is to provide general educational information to the pet-owning public.

Cataracts And Cataract Surgery



Animal Eye Clinic

Oklahoma City and Tulsa

What Is A Cataract?

The lens is a living ocular tissue that, when healthy, is transparent. A normal lens helps focus light on the retina, a light sensitive nerve tissue located in the back of the eye. A cataract is an abnormality of the lens in which an opacity, or a cloudy change in the tissue, scatters light. Hence, the normal composition of the lens is disrupted and its transparency is lost. If a large portion of the lens becomes a cataract, it prevents formed light from reaching the retina, causing poor vision. A cataract can assume a variety of appearances such as small spots, a cracked-ice appearance, a diffused milky haze, a "pearl-like sheen, or white streaks. The cataract may initially affect a small area and progress to involve a larger portion of the lens. Rate of progression is difficult to predict, though it tends to be more rapid in younger animals. Cataracts may develop in one or both eyes.

Understanding Cataracts

What Causes Cataracts?

Most cataracts in dogs have a hereditary basis. Cataracts can also result from injury to or inflammation



Mature cataract

in the eye, or systemic diseases that have an affect on the eyes. DIABETES is the most common disease associated with cataracts in dogs. Although it may be difficult to name the specific cause of cataracts, generally those cataracts that develop in the eyes that are free of signs of disease (whether ocular or systemic) are assumed to be inherited. Poor nutrition is an uncommon cause of cataracts, but has been suspected in some young dogs.

What Can Be Done For A Pet With Cataracts?

What Is The Treatment?

Medical remedies have been inaccurately advertised as effective for the treatment of cataracts. There is no proven medical treatment known to reverse or slow the progression of, or prevent the formation of a cataract. Some promoted agents actually worsen the cataracts rather than improve the condition. Surgery is the only known treatment both in animals and humans, and often provides a return of functional vision to pets.

What Should You Do If A Cataract Is Suspected?

First arrange to have your pet examined by a board certified veterinary ophthalmologist. Although the lens is an important component of the visual system, a complete eye examination is necessary. Early examination is always recommended especially in diabetics. The health of the retina and other parts of the eye should be evaluated prior to the formation of complete cataracts. If the cataract is entirely mature, the area behind the lens may not be able to be examined directly. In most cases, an electroretinogram and ultrasound will be recommended to evaluate the retina. The cataract will be classified by cause, area of involvement, and stage of progression. Not all cataracts lead to blindness, and incomplete cataracts may not impair vision significantly.



Cataract Surgery

Cataract surgery is a one day outpatient procedure. It begins with pet drop off in the Tulsa or OKC office between the hours of 9-10 a.m. ERG/Ultrasound tests are performed to evaluate retinal function and placement. If tests are passed, surgery is performed early afternoon and your pet is normally released by 3-5 P.M. On the average, vision returns within a few days following surgery and requires three to five postoperative evaluations over a three month period.

What Does Cataract Surgery Involve?

The various surgical procedures available for your pet are demanding and require meticulous and precise microsurgical techniques. Surgery is performed using an operating microscope and sophisticated microsurgical instruments. Dr. Gwin performs phacoemulsification through a 3.2 mm incision. The cloudy lens is emulsified (broken up) and aspirated from the lenticular bag. A 41 diopter foldable lens is then injected into the bag replacing the cataractous lens. With today's phacoemulsification equipment, foldable intraocular lenses, etc., visual acuity in most postoperative cataract cases appears normal, just as we see after cataract removal in human ophthalmology. It is quite amazing to see the difference following cataract removal, especially in diabetics. Although vision can be lost quickly, it is extremely pleasing to see that vision is quickly restored and old familiar habits resume after removal of the cataracts.