

Key Points

- Have your pets diabetic cataracts **EVALUATED EARLY**, preferably before total blindness occurs. Blood sugar (glucose) does **NOT** need to be well controlled prior to referral, so **DO NOT WAIT** to call for an appointment. Waiting can result in permanent blindness.
- Cataract induced inflammation is very serious. Red irritated eyes, conjunctivitis, blepharospasms, and discomfort can develop into panophthalmitis, glaucoma, retinal detachment, etc. This can happen as quickly as 2-3 days.
- In the above cases, anti-inflammatory medications, such as NPD, Predacetate, Flurbiprofen, and Diclofenac are usually indicated.
- To schedule an evaluation by Dr. Gwin, call either of our offices in Oklahoma City or Tulsa and inform our receptionist you have a pet that is a diabetic. We do consider this a high priority. Bring our referral form filled out by your primary veterinarian and any eye medication prescribed for your pet with you to the appointment.
- We will stay in close contact with your veterinarian who will receive a written report by Dr. Gwin following each examination.



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.



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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.

Diabetic Cataracts



Animal Eye Clinic

Oklahoma City and Tulsa

Understanding Diabetic Cataracts

Diabetic Cataract Development

Diabetics develop cataracts in association with an "overload" of a metabolic pathway within the normally clear crystalline lens. With this overload, the normally clear lens fibers break down their normal architectural structure. The lens fibers no longer allow light to pass through the lens unaltered. A high percentage of diabetic dogs develop cloudy cataractous lens rapidly, sometimes within 1-2 weeks. Approximately 40-50% of the cataract surgeries performed by Dr. Gwin are on diabetics. **The general success rate for cataract surgery in dogs is 90-95%.** This success rate remains high in diabetic cataracts that have just developed and have not been complicated by cataract induced inflammation.



Mature cataract

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.



Two weeks post op cataract surgery

Diabetic Cataract Surgery

Cataract surgery is a one day outpatient procedure. It begins with normal A.M. food and insulin the morning of surgery followed by 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.

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.



Two weeks post op cataract surgery