

HORNER'S SYNDROME IN PETS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



WHAT IS HORNER'S SYNDROME

HORNER'S SYNDROME IS A NEUROLOGICAL CONDITION THAT AFFECTS THE NERVES CONTROLLING EYE AND FACIAL MUSCLES. IT OCCURS WHEN THERE IS A DISRUPTION IN THE NERVE PATHWAY THAT RUNS FROM THE BRAIN TO THE EYE. THIS CONDITION CAN AFFECT DOGS, CATS, AND OTHER ANIMALS.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF HORNER'S SYNDROME?

PETS WITH HORNER'S SYNDROME TYPICALLY SHOW THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS, USUALLY ON ONE SIDE OF THE FACE:

- DROOPING EYELID (PTOSIS)
- CONSTRICTED PUPIL (MIOSIS)
- SUNKEN APPEARANCE OF THE EYE (ENOPHTHALMOS)
- RAISED THIRD EYELID (NICTITATING MEMBRANE)

WHAT CAUSES HORNER'S SYNDROME?

HORNER'S SYNDROME IS CAUSED BY DAMAGE TO THE NERVE PATHWAY BETWEEN THE BRAIN AND THE EYE. COMMON CAUSES INCLUDE:

- INNER OR MIDDLE EAR INFECTIONS
- IDIOPATHIC CASES (UNKNOWN CAUSE), WHICH RESOLVE ON THEIR OWN IN MANY INSTANCES
- TRAUMA OR INJURY TO THE HEAD, NECK, OR CHEST
- TUMORS AFFECTING THE NERVE PATHWAY
- BITE WOUNDS OR ABSCESES

SCAN THE QR CODE TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH OUR VETERINARY OPHTHALMOLOGIST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



DIAGNOSIS:

A VETERINARIAN WILL PERFORM A PHYSICAL AND NEUROLOGICAL EXAM, CHECKING EYE FUNCTION AND FACIAL NERVES. ADDITIONAL TESTS, SUCH AS IMAGING (X-RAYS, MRI, OR CT SCANS), MAY BE RECOMMENDED IF AN UNDERLYING CAUSE IS SUSPECTED.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

TREATMENT DEPENDS ON THE UNDERLYING CAUSE:

- IF AN EAR INFECTION IS PRESENT, ANTIBIOTICS OR ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS MAY BE PRESCRIBED.
- IF TRAUMA IS SUSPECTED, SUPPORTIVE CARE AND MONITORING ARE RECOMMENDED.
- IF A TUMOR OR OTHER SERIOUS CONDITION IS FOUND, SPECIALIZED TREATMENT MAY BE REQUIRED.
- IN IDIOPATHIC CASES (NO KNOWN CAUSE), SYMPTOMS OFTEN IMPROVE ON THEIR OWN OVER A FEW WEEKS TO MONTHS.

PROGNOSIS

THE OUTLOOK FOR PETS WITH HORNER'S SYNDROME VARIES BASED ON THE CAUSE. MANY IDIOPATHIC CASES RESOLVE ON THEIR OWN, WHILE THOSE DUE TO INFECTIONS OR INJURIES OFTEN IMPROVE WITH TREATMENT. IF A TUMOR OR SEVERE NERVE DAMAGE IS INVOLVED, THE PROGNOSIS DEPENDS ON THE SEVERITY OF THE CONDITION.

WHEN TO SEE A VETERINARIAN

IF YOU NOTICE ANY OF THE SIGNS OF HORNER'S SYNDROME IN YOUR PET, SCHEDULE AN EXAM WITH YOUR VETERINARIAN. EARLY EVALUATION HELPS DETERMINE IF AN UNDERLYING CONDITION NEEDS TREATMENT.