# Veterinary Eye Center

Under Pressure:
Glaucoma & other
Ophthalmic
Emergencies

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VEC – LIC, Queens

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LIC:

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Referrals

Available weekdays for same day/urgent appointments!

\*Please call to schedule (No walk ins)

#### **VEC – Hell's Kitchen**

357 West 52<sup>nd</sup> St, New York, NY Mon – Fri, 7:30am – 5:30pm 646-838-3915 info@vecnyc.com

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#### **Manhattan:**

Alex LoPinto, DVM, DACVO Becky Telle, DVM, DACVO







### **Exciting Announcements!**

Coming Fall of 2025: Veterinary Eye Center of Connecticut!

Greenwich, CT





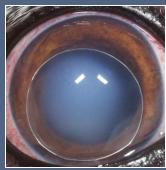


Coming Early 2026: Veterinary Eye Center of NYC – Brooklyn!!

Park Slope



1. Glaucoma



2. Lens luxation



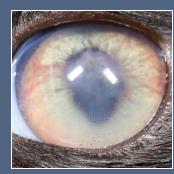
3. Deep Corneal ulcers



4. Corneal ruptures



5. Proptosis



6. Uveitis



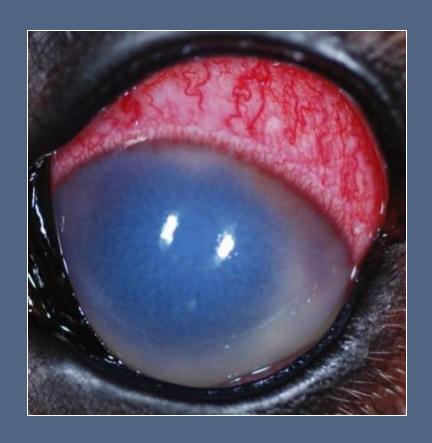
7. Hyphema



- 1. Recognize: What are the classic clinical signs?
- 2. Diagnose: What tests should I do?
- 3. (Subclassify: What type is it?)
- 4. Triage: How emergent is this?
- 5. Treat: What are the initial steps for management?



Glaucoma



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



### What is it?

Decreased fluid drainage within the eye

- → Fluid buildup within the eye
- → Increased intraocular pressure
- → Damage to the eye, especially the optic nerve
- → Pain and blindness



Diagnose

Subclassify

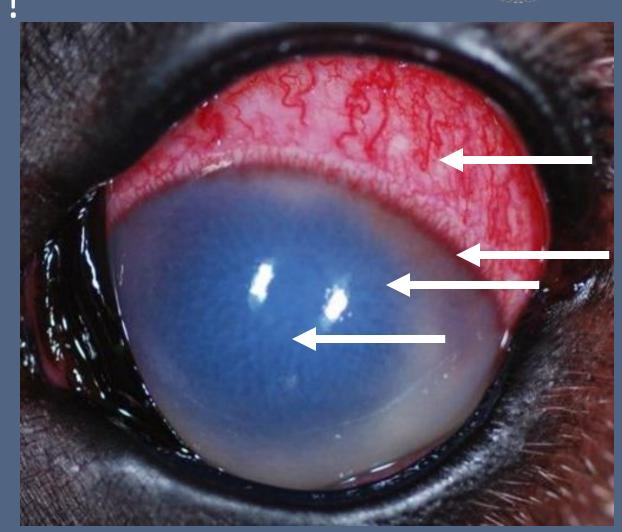
Triage

Treat



What are the clinical signs?

- Episcleral injection: A "red eye"
- Corneal edema
- Perilimbal vessels
- Mydriasis
- Pain: Often not overt eye pain!
  - Lethargy, decreased appetite



Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat



## What test(s) should I do?



1. Tonometry!

IF: IOP > 25mmHg+ Compatible signs





## 1. Is it primary or secondary?

2. Is it acute or chronic?

These factors help determine treatment plan and urgency

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

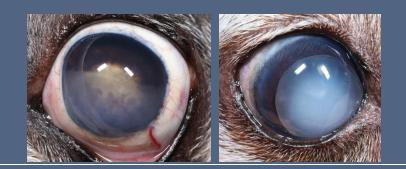






1. Is it primary or secondary?

Primary Secondary



Hyphema

Inherited abnormality of the drainage angle

- Rule out secondary causes
- More likely if: Purebred, typical breeds, middleaged, F >M

Secondary to another condition: Lens luxation, uveitis, tumor, etc.

- Does the inside of the eye look normal(ish) or no?
- Look for flare, hypopyon, hyphema, lens luxation, tumors

Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

**Treat** 





#### 1. Is it acute or chronic?

Acute Chronic



- Classic signs
- Normal globe size
- Often more painful
- Often absent vision, but may have response on some tests
- If you can see the optic nerve: Often pale, but may still look normal

- Buphthalmos!
- Blind (Menace? Dazzle? PLR?)
- Cupped optic nerve head
- Often have retinal degeneration

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat





How emergent is this?

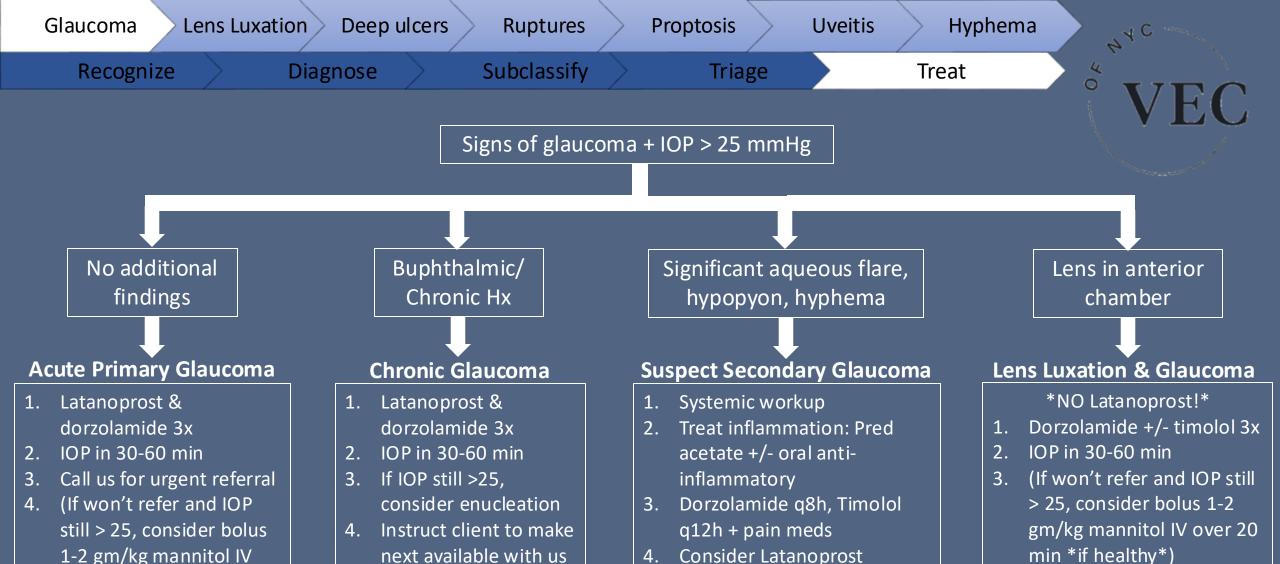
Emergent North



- Acute
- And/or vision left
- → Start treating and call us!

Not sure? Call or email us!
We are always happy to help!

- Chronic and blind?
- → Provide pain management and direct clients to make an appointment with us (we are always happy to consult on these too though!)



carefully

referral

5. Visual: Call us for urgent

Blind: Instruct client to make

appt with us/enucleation

Visual: Call us for urgent

Instruct client to make

appt with us/enucleation

referral

5. Blind/buphthalmos:

TGH: Latanoprost

meds

q12h, Dorzolamide

q8h, +/- Timolol q12h,

+/- pred q12h, + pain

over 20 min \*if healthy\*)

TGH: Latanoprost q12h,

Dorzolamide q8h, +/-

Timolol q12h, +/- pred

q12h + pain meds





Primary glaucoma is much less common in cats

- → Most glaucoma cases are secondary
- → Check for uveitis!

Latanoprost is not effective, especially long-term, in cats!

- Dorzolamide our go-to
- → Can also use timolol

Hypokalemia associated with topical administration of dorzolamide 2% ophthalmic solution in cats

Tara M. Czepiel D | Neal T Wasserman

Veterinary Ophthalmology. 2021;24:12-19.

Speaking of Dorzolamide...

Hypokalemia and hyperchloremia a possible side effect (mechanism unknown)

BW: 1 month, every 6 months

And timolol...

→ Monitor HR

And while we're at it, prednisolone...

Monitor for signs of corneal ulcer

Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema



Questions about Glaucoma?





## Lens luxation

Glaucoma



Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

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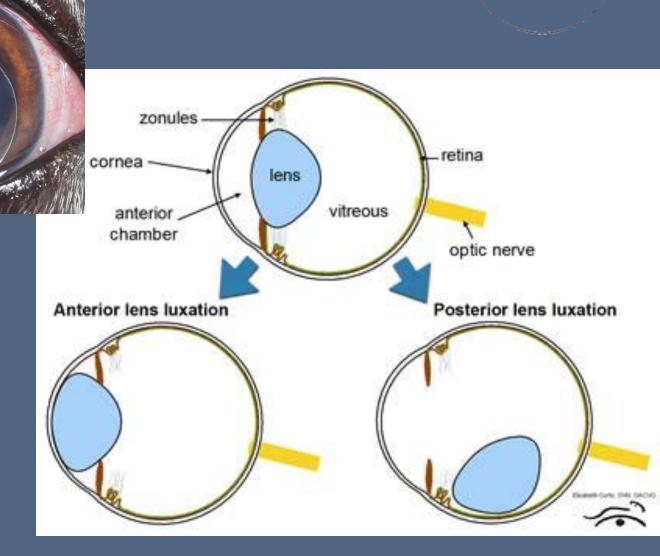
## What is it?

Zonule fiber breakdown

Genetics, uveitis, glaucoma,

hypermature cataracts, senility

- → Dislodgement of the lens
- → Movement of that lens into the anterior or posterior chamber
- → Pain and blindness

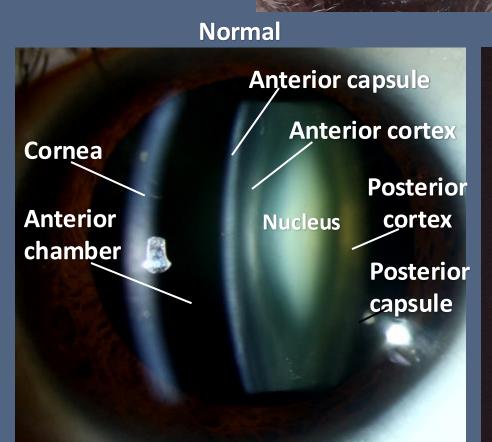


Recognize Diagnose Subclassify

### What tests should I do?

#### Ophthalmic examination!

- The lens is in the wrong place-slit beam is your friend!
  - Can you see the edge of the lens?
  - Can you see the pupillary margin?
  - Is there a clear anterior chamber or something in it?
- Typically painful
- +/- Episcleral injection
- +/- Elevated IOP
- +/- Corneal edema
- +/- Retinal detachment







Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat

## VEC

## What tests should I do?

IOP!



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

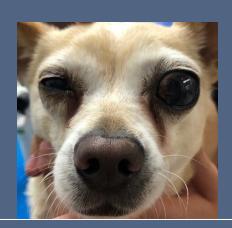
Treat





1. Is it primary or secondary?

Primary Secondary



Inherited abnormality of the zonules

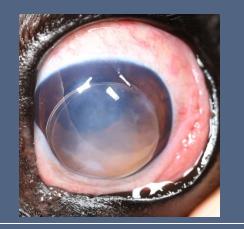
- Rule out secondary causes
- More likely if: Purebred, typical breeds (small terriers especially)

Secondary to another condition: *Glaucoma, uveitis, cataracts* 

- Look for buphthalmos, hypopyon, hyphema, cataractous lens
- More likely to be blind and therefore less urgent

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage





How emergent is this?

Urgent Less Urgenx

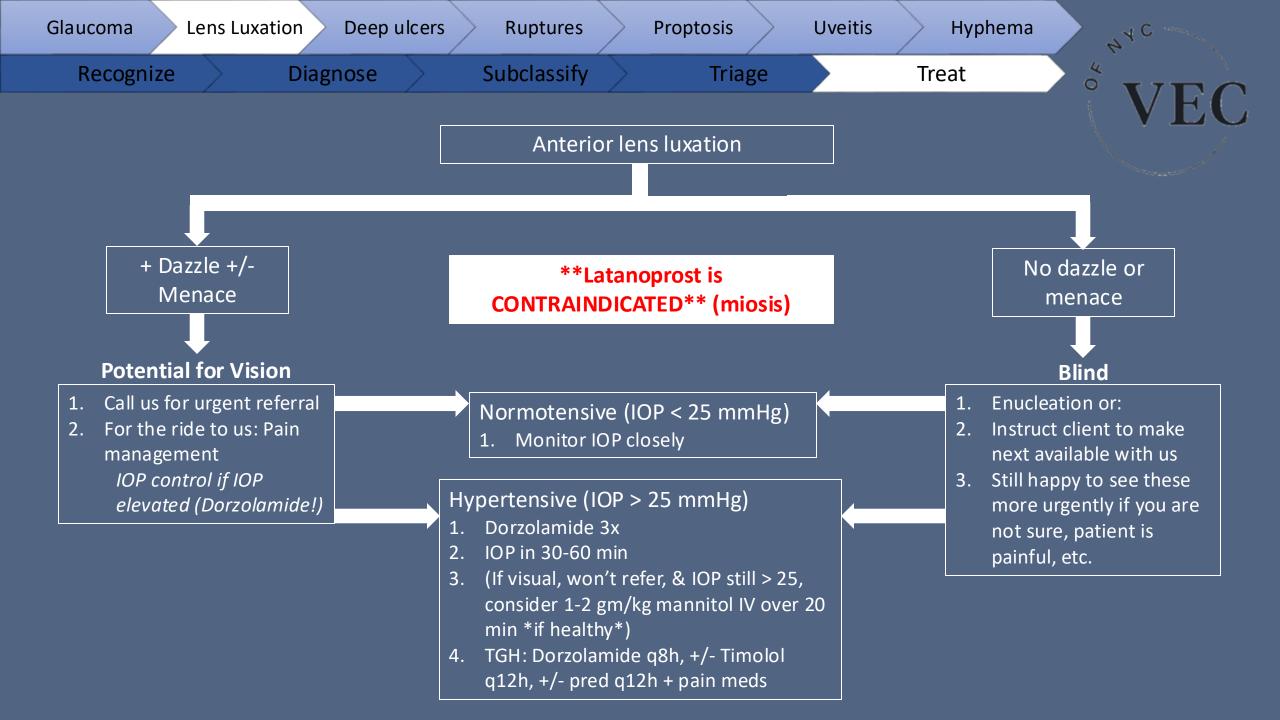


Treat

- Anterior and visual (dazzle?)
- High IOP difficult to control
- → Start treating and call us!

Not sure? Call or email us!
We are always happy to help!

- Secondary to buphthalmos?
- Blind?
- Normal IOP?
- Provide pain management and direct clients to make an appointment with us





## What about posterior luxations?

#### What should I look for?

- Lens usually ventral in vitreous chamber
- You can see the entire pupillary margin in front of the lens
- Deep anterior chamber
- Usually comfortable
- +/- elevated IOP

Latanoprost CAN be used to constrict pupil in front of lens \*\*Only use if you're sure\*\*

## Tend to be less emergent in the immediate phase, but likely to still have long-term consequences:

- Check IOP
- Instruct client to make an appointment with us or call if IOP elevated and difficult to control





## Because cats are weird...Feline nuances:

Primary lens luxation is less common in cats

- → Most cases are secondary
- → Check for uveitis!

Anterior lens luxation tends to be less urgent in cats.

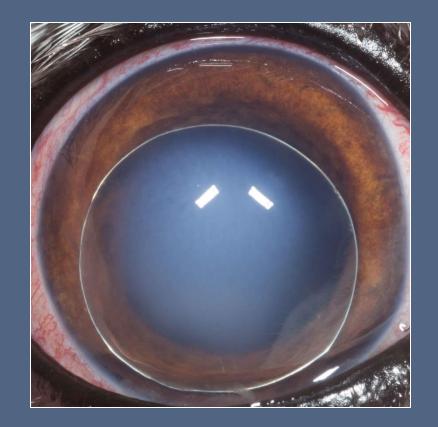
Big Anterior chambers = more space for the lens! Latanoprost is not effective, especially long-term, in cats!

- → Dorzolamide our go-to
- → Can also use timolol

Same medication cautions:

- Dorzolamide:
   Hypokalemia and hyperchloremia
- 2. Timolol: Watch HR
- 3. Prednisolone: Monitor for signs of ulceration

## Questions about Lens luxation?



## Deep corneal ulcers



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



## What is it?

Deep/melting ulcers and descemetoceles: Ulcers that have become infected and have lost stromal tissue

#### Possible characteristics:

- Appearance of depth
- White/creamy appearance
- "Melting" appearance
- Tend to have more severe uveitis
- Tend to be very painful



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat

## VEC

## What tests should I do?

- Examination
- Cytology and culture
- Fluoresceine stain
- IOP, if safe







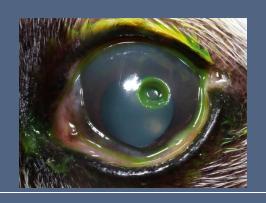
Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

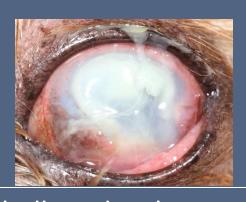
Treat





#### How deep?

Descemetocele FJOg Okogo



- Looks deep
- Ring of stain (Descemet's membrane does not stain)

- Shallow depth
- Entire lesions takes up stain

Not sure or worried? Call or email us! We are always happy to help!





#### How emergent is this?

Emergent Charles

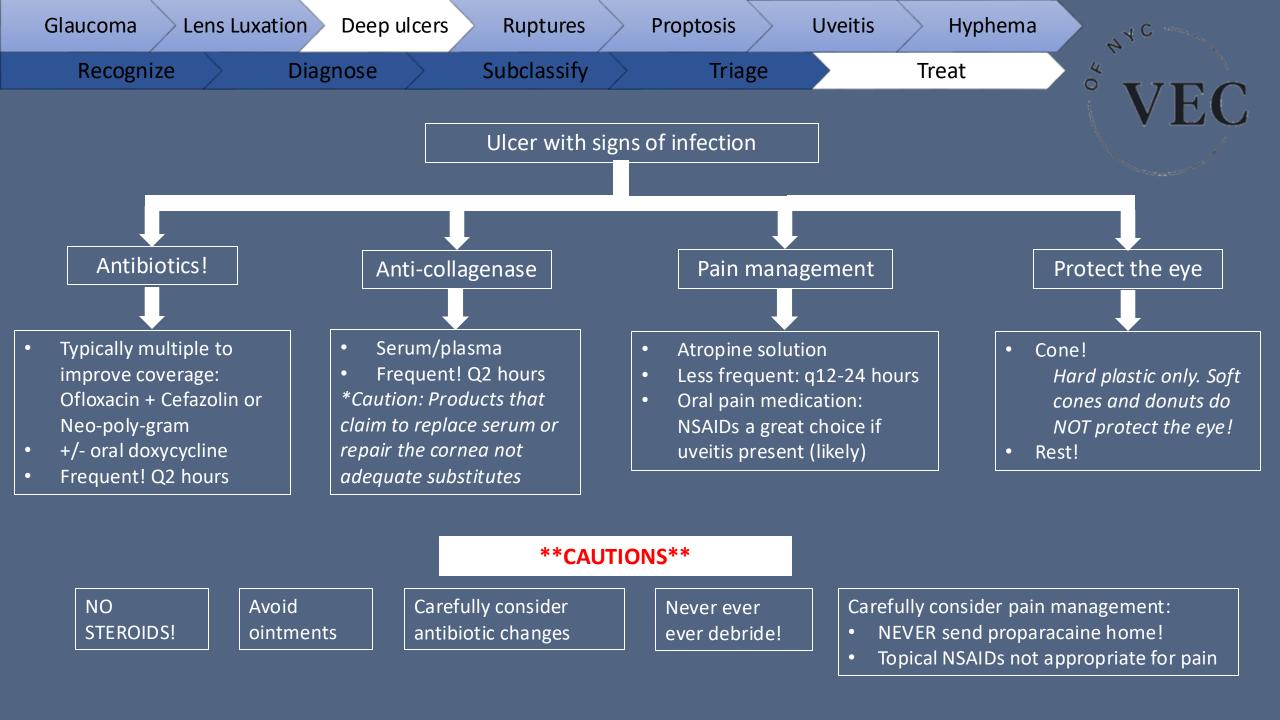


Hyphema

not in imminent risk of rupturing

- Descemetocele: Imminent risk of rupture
- > 50% depth

Note sure or worried? Call or email us!
We are always happy to help!

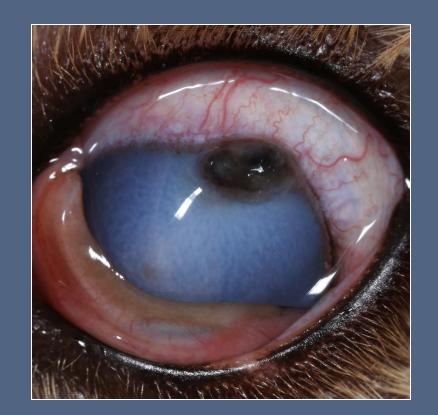


Questions about deep ulcers?



Deep ulcers

Corneal ruptures (perforations) and full-thickness lacerations



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



### What is it?

- Full-thickness corneal defect
  - Ruptured ulcer, lacerations
- May have iris prolapse
- Often have intraocular changes: Hyphema, fibrin, severe uveitis
- May be leaking intraocular fluid
- Eye may look "shriveled" or smaller



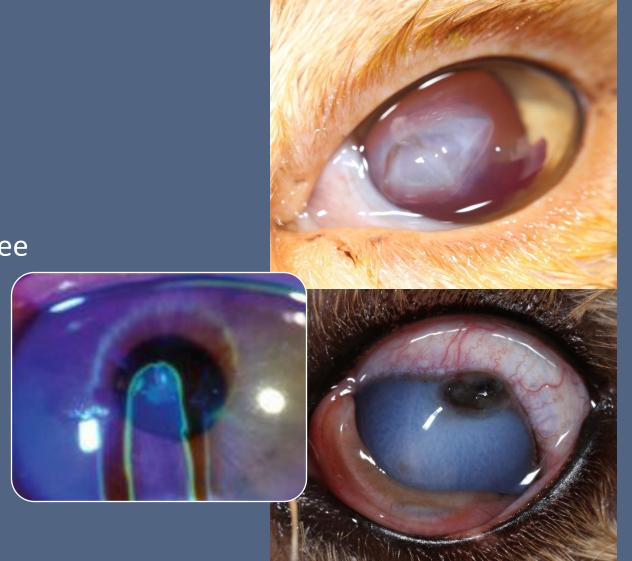
Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

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## What test(s) should I do?

- As little as possible! \*Fragile eye\*
- Menace, dazzle, PLR
  - Is the eye visual?
  - Dazzle and consensual PLR can tell you potential for vision even if you cannot see into the eye
- +/- Stain
  - Seidel test: Is the eye actively leaking?
- Note: You CAN apply proparacaine to facilitate exam!
- Call us!



Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat



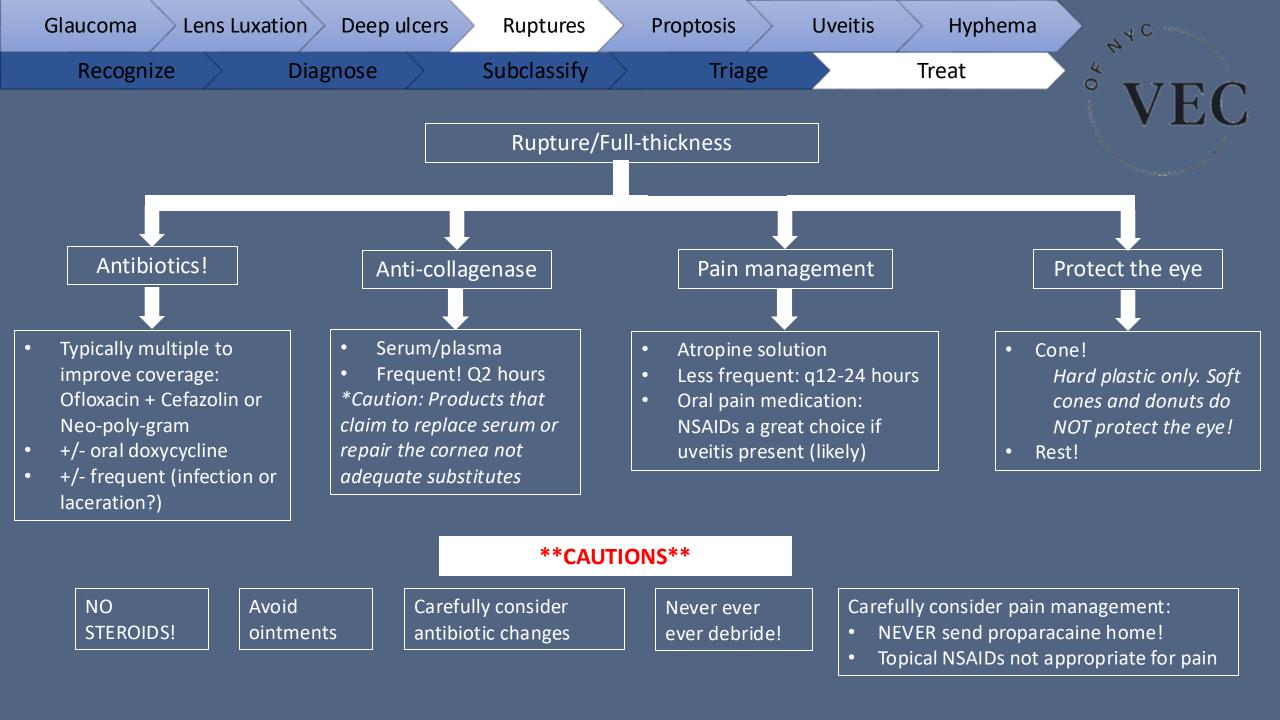
#### How emergent is this?

Ewergeut Lour Mach

- Any potential for vision!
- + Menace, dazzle, consensual PLR
- → Start treating and call us!

- Blind
- → Provide pain management, consider enucleation

Not sure? Call or email us! We are always happy to help!

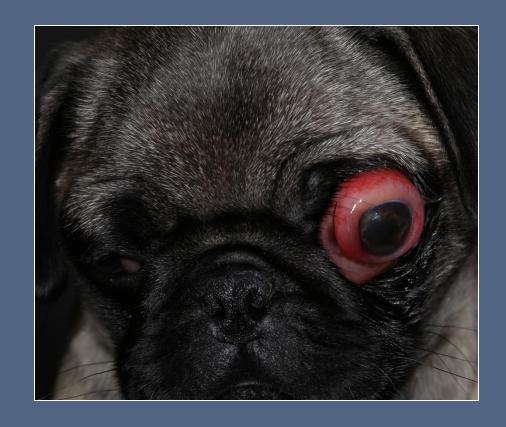


Questions about ruptures?





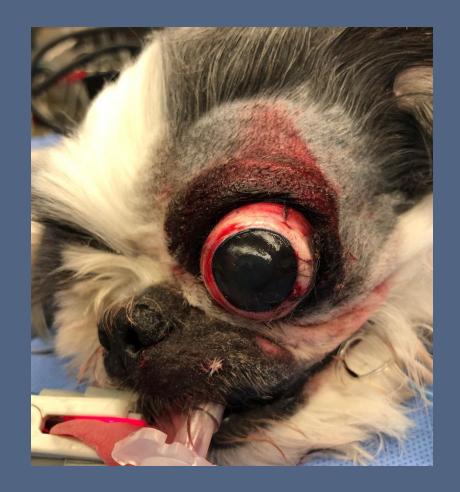
### Proptosis





#### What is it?

- Eye is out of the orbit
- Eyelids are stuck behind the eye
- \*\*Implies significant trauma!\*\*



Diagnose

Subclassify

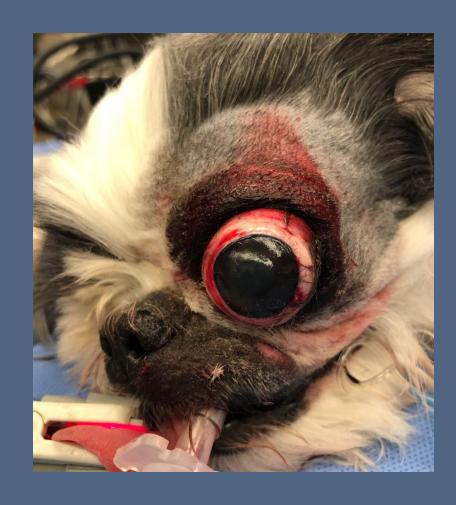
Triage

Treat



#### What test(s) should I do?

- Thorough history and full systemic exam
  - Trauma elsewhere? Patient stable?
- Ophthalmic:
  - If truly proptosed, will not be able to blink = cannot assess menace or dazzle
  - Consensual PLR is your friend!
  - Thorough assessment of extraocular tissues
    - How many muscles torn?
    - Can I see the optic nerve?
  - Fluoresceine stain
    - Eye often dry and ulcerated



Recognize Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

**Treat** 



#### All emergent for patient comfort!

To keep the eye or not to keep the eye?

Enucleation











- Globe damage: Minimal or superficial
- Direct and/or consensual PLR present
- \*2 or less extraocular muscles torn!\*
- \*Optic nerve NOT visible!\*

- More globe damage: Rupture, hyphema
- Consensual PLR absent
- \*3 or more extraocular muscles torn!\*
- \*Optic nerve visible!\*

Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat



#### Immediate:

- 1. Stabilize patient
- 2. Pain management
- 3. Lubricate the eye!

Decide enucleation or temporary tarsorrhaphy

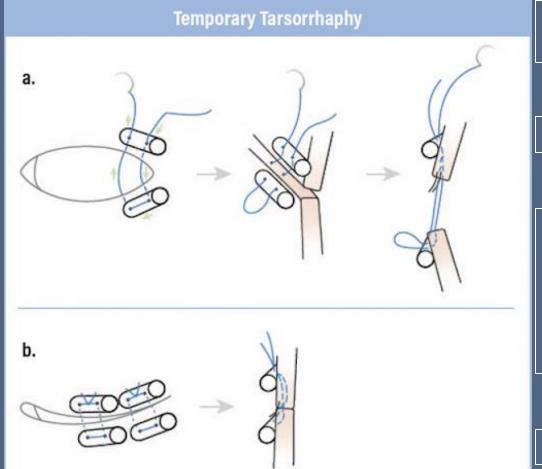
#### \*\*CAUTIONS\*\*

Use bumpers!
The sutures will be under tension

Be mindful of suture placement!

Leave inside corner open for medicating

Leave long suture tags!



Heavy sedation or general anesthesia

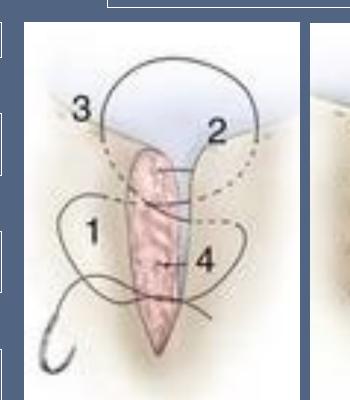
Hyphema

+/- lateral canthotomy

2 horizontal mattress sutures \*with bumpers\* \*through the eyelid margins\* Non-absorbable suture (4-0 nylon)

Close lateral canthus





1. Skin to cut

2. Cut to meibomian

opening (opposite side)

3. Meibomian opening to cut (opposite side again)

4. Cut to skin (opposite side

again)

#### TIPS:

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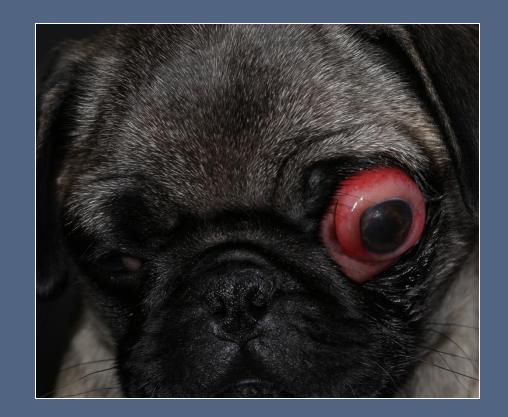
Smaller is better: 1-2 mm length for the entire stitch!

Close the rest with simple interrupted

Incorporate the ends of each into the knot of the next: Keeps suture away from the cornea

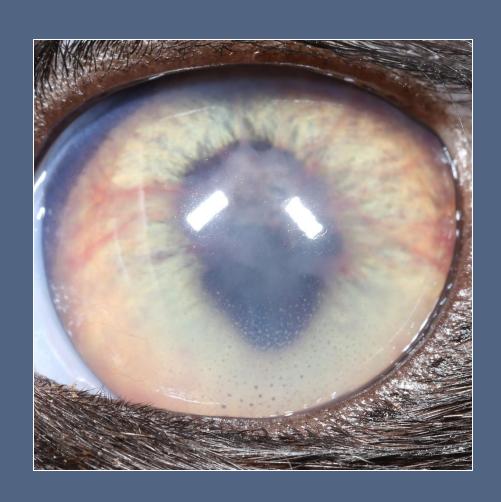


Questions about proptosis?





Uveitis



Diagnose

Subclassify

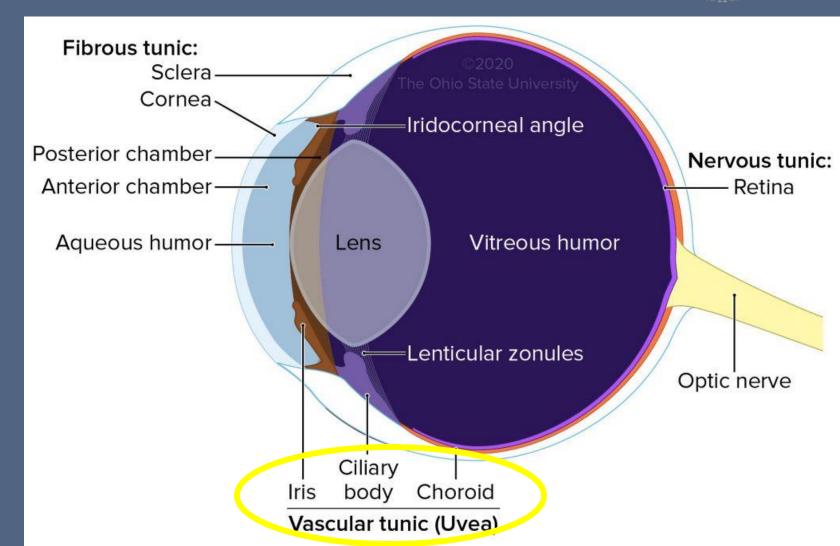
Triage

Treat



#### What is it?

- Inflammation of the uveal tract
- "Anterior"
  - Affecting the iris and ciliary body
- "Posterior"
  - Affecting the choroid
- Can be both! ("Panuveitis")



Diagnose

Subclassify

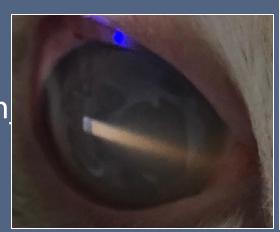
Triage

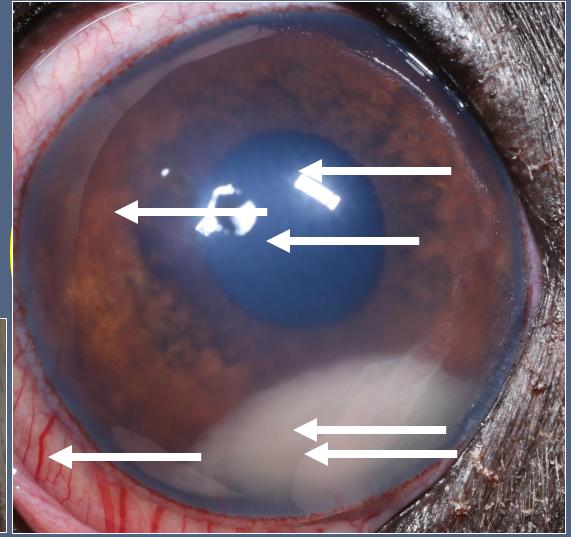
Treat



#### What are the clinical signs?

- "Flare": Protein in the anterior chamber (AC)
  - Hazy/cloudy appearance in front of the lens and iris but behind the cornea
- Cell: Inflammatory cells in the AC
- +/- Fibrin
- +/- Keratic precipitates
- +/- Rubeosis iridis
- +/- Hypopyon
- Episcleral injection and con hyperemia
- Miosis





Diagnose

Subclassify

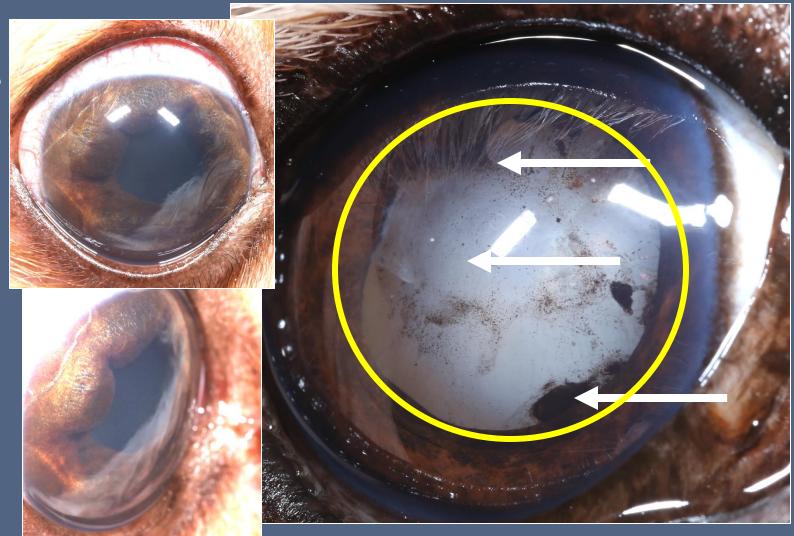
Triage

Treat



### Chronic clinical signs:

- Pigment deposition
  - Often from the iris onto the lens capsule
- <del>></del> Synechia
- <del>></del> Dyscoria
- <del>> Iris Bombe</del>
- Cataract
- Glaucoma
  - Pupillary block
  - Clogging and scarring of iridocorneal drainage angle



Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

Recognize

Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



#### What tests should I do?

- Ophthalmic Examination
  - IOP:
    - Low: Appropriate for inflammation
    - Monitor for glaucoma
  - Fluoresceine stain:
    - Help find cause (Reflex from ulcer?)
    - Safe for steroids?
- Aqueocentesis Cytology +/- culture
- Systemic Examination
- Systemic diagnostics
  - CBC, chemistry, UA
  - Infectious disease testing appropriate for the area
  - If with hemorrhage: Consider BP and assessment for coagulopathies





Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat



## Is this related to systemic disease?

Primary Ocular Systemic

- Is there another ocular condition that can cause uveitis?
- Does the case fit primary ocular uveitis diseases?
- Is the patient otherwise acting healthy?
- Systemic workup normal?

- Is the patient acting otherwise sick?
- Workup abnormalities?
- Ocular causes ruled out?
- Bilateral uveitis?

Not sure or worried? Call or email us!
We are always happy to help!

Diagnose

Subclassify

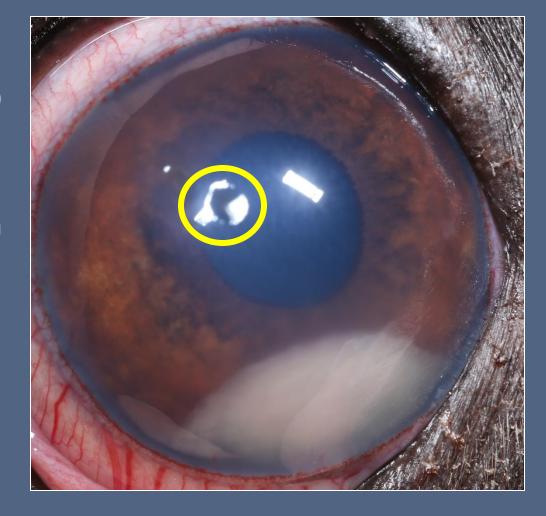
Triage

Treat



#### Is there an ocular disease that can cause uveitis?

- Corneal ulcer?
  - Reflex uveitis common with ulcers
    - Superficial ulcer: Tends to be mild (trace to 1+ flare)
    - Infected/stromal ulcer: Can be more severe
- Glaucoma?
  - Even primary glaucoma can cause uveitis when IOP is elevated
    - Tends to be mild (trace to 1+ flare)
- Lens luxation?
  - Especially in acute phase



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat

Does the case fit primary ocular uveitis diseases?

- Golden Retriever Pigmentary Uveitis
- Ocular Melanosis
- Uveodermatologic Syndrome
- Lipemic uveitis
- Immune-mediated uveitis
- FIP related uveitis



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



#### Golden Retriever Pigmentary Uveitis

- Bilateral disease
  - But can be asymmetric
- Largely of Golden Retrievers
  - Occasionally seen in other breeds
    - Labs!
- Prevalence: 5-10% of NA Goldens!
- Average age of onset: 8-10 years



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

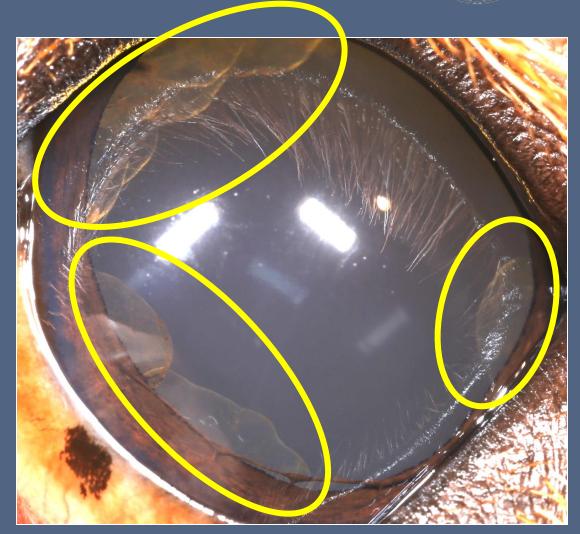
Treat



### Golden Retriever Pigmentary Uveitis

- Associated with pigment dispersion in the eye
  - Pigment on the anterior lens capsule and cysts are early signs





Recognize Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



#### Golden Retriever Pigmentary Uveitis

- Commonly leads to glaucoma and blindness
  - Prognosis for eyes and vision is guarded
- Patients with cysts should be closely monitored for uveitis and glaucoma!





Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

#### Ocular melanosis

- Bilateral disease
  - But can be asymmetric
- Most commonly in Cairn Terriers
  - Inherited (unknown mode/gene)
  - Occasionally seen in other breeds
    - Labs again, Boxers
- Prevalence: ~10% of Cairns!
- Average age of onset: Middle aged



Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

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#### Ocular melanosis

- Results in increased pigmentation across many structures of the eye
  - Eye appears darkened: Iris, sclera, cornea
- Leads to uveitis
- Leads to glaucoma
- Prognosis for eye and vision is guarded



Recognize Diagnose

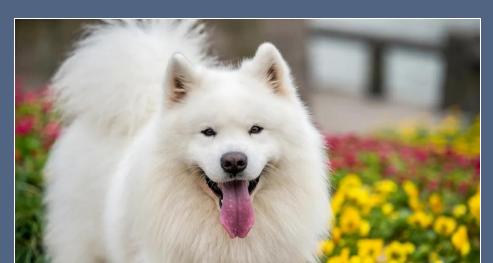
Subclassify

Triage

Treat



- Bilateral disease
  - But can be asymmetric
- Most commonly Arctic Breeds
  - Akitas, Huskies, Malamutes, Samoyed
- Age of onset: 6mo 6 years
  - Varies but can be young!







Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

#### Uveodermatologic Syndrome

- Autoimmune disease in which pigmented cells are targets
  - Eyes and skin
- Skin lesions include inflammation, depigmentation +/- ulceration
  - Most commonly around the nose and eyelids
  - +/- Mouth, ears, paw pads



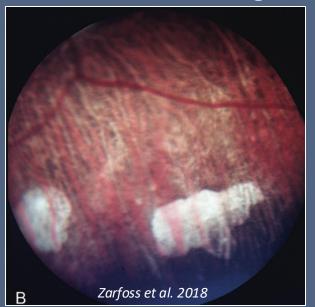


Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

### Uveodermatologic Syndrome

- Ocular lesions often precede skin lesions
- Ocular lesions include depigmentation of the fundus and uveitis
  - Can lead to retinal detachment
  - Often leads to glaucoma and blindness









Diagnose

Subclassify

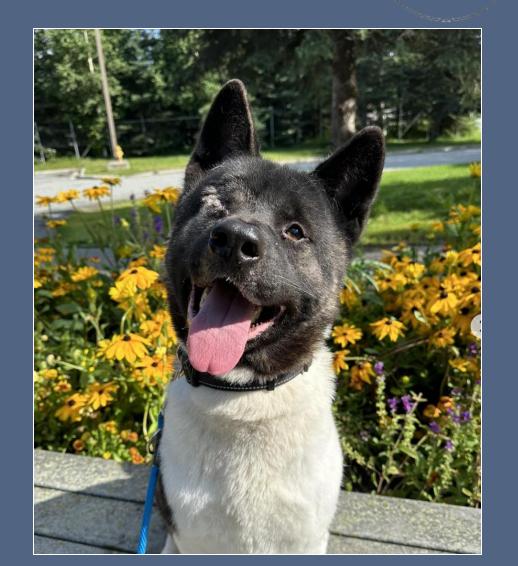
Triage

Treat



#### Uveodermatologic Syndrome

- Definitive diagnosis is via biopsy
  - Presumptive diagnosis can often be made via clinical signs, breed, etc.
- Can be difficult to control
  - Often requires systemic immunosuppression and topical therapy
  - Requires long-term management
- Prognosis for eye and vision guarded



Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

## Lipemic Uveitis

- Uveitis characterized by fatty infiltration of the aqueous humor
  - Milky appearance to aqueous
- 2 things have to be true:
  - 1. Hypertriglyceridemia
  - 2. Leaky uvea (uveitis)
- Patients should be assessed for hypertriglyceridemia and underlying causes
  - Primary idiopathic
  - Diet
  - Pancreatitis
  - Endocrinopathy: Hypothyroidism, Cushing's, etc.
- Can lead to secondary problems such as Glaucoma, but often do well



Diagnose

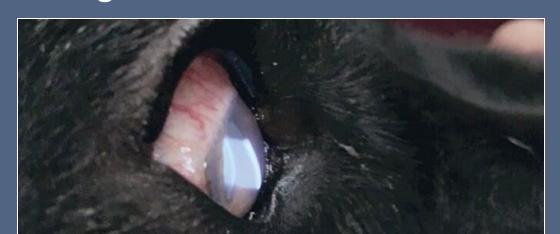
Subclassify

Triage

Treat

#### Immune Mediated Uveitis

- Diagnosis by exclusion
  - If patient does not have systemic signs, has a normal systemic workup, and does not fit an ocular specific cause or type of uveitis
- Any breed
- Age of onset: Any age but most commonly middle-aged







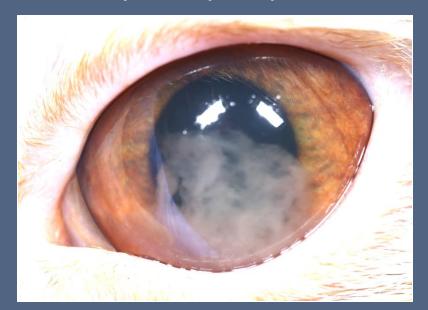
Glaucoma Lens Luxation Deep ulcers Ruptures Proptosis Uveitis Hyphema

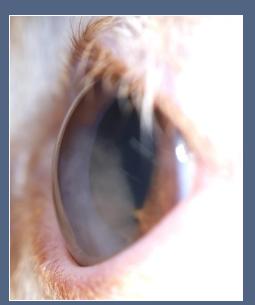
Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

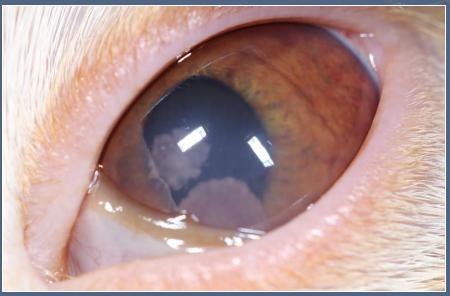
### eat 4

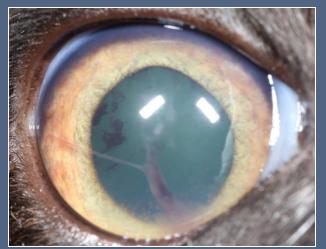
#### Feline Infectious Peritonitis Uveitis

- Uveitis more common with non-effusive form (but can occur with wet form too)
- Young cat with uveitis = Consider FIP
  - Fibrinous uveitis and large keratic precipitates are especially suspicious









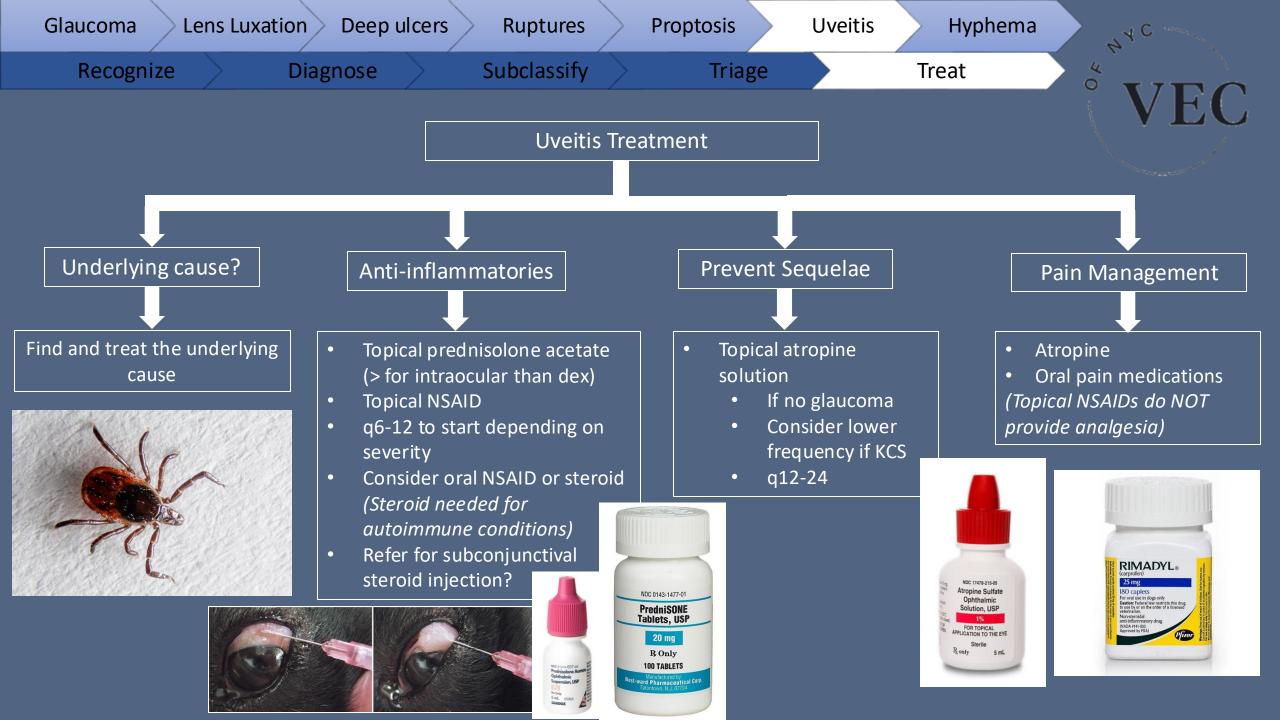
Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

#### How emergent are uveitis cases?

- All cases warrant treatment immediately
- The more severe the uveitis, the more emergent in general
- If systemic disease possible, determining the underlying cause important for overall health
- Uveitis can be painful, so immediate treatment is important for patient comfort







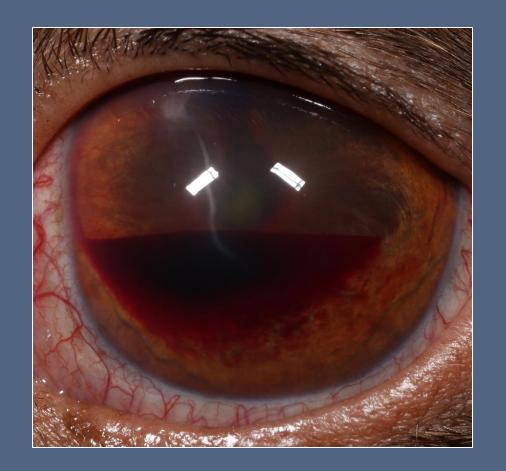


Questions about uveitis?





Hyphema



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat

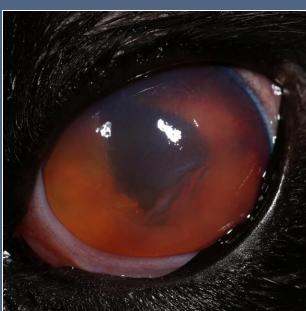
## ° VEC

#### What is it?

- Hemorrhage into the anterior chamber
- Can appear as the entire anterior chamber filled with blood
- May also appear hazy with a slight red hue when mixed with inflammatory protein
- Can clot
  - Tends to settle in the ventral anterior chamber
  - Can form clots stuck to other ocular structures like the iris or lens







Diagnose

Subclassify

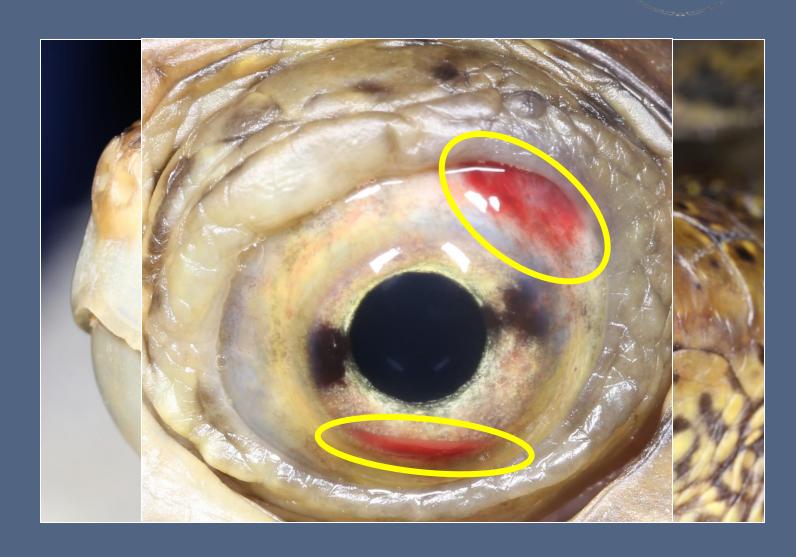
Triage

Treat



#### What can cause it?

- Trauma
- Retinal detachment
- Intraocular mass
- Uveitis
- Systemic hypertension
- Infectious disease
  - Especially tick borne
- Clotting disorders



Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



#### What test(s) should I do?

- Ophthalmic Examination
  - IOP:
    - Low: Appropriate for inflammation
    - Monitor for glaucoma
  - Fluoresceine stain:
    - Safe for steroids?
- +/- Ocular ultrasound





Diagnose

Subclassify

Triage

Treat



#### What test(s) should I do?

- Systemic Examination
- Systemic diagnostics
  - Blood pressure, blood pressure, blood pressure!
  - CBC, chemistry, UA
  - Clotting times, consider Von Willebrand Disease testing
  - Infectious disease testing appropriate for the area

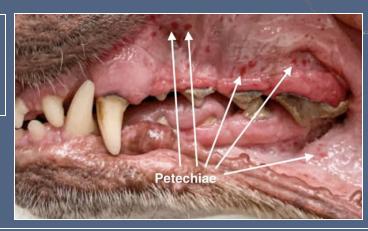






Is this related to systemic disease?

Primary Ocular Systemic



- Is there an ocular condition that can explain it?
  - Intraocular mass?
  - Retinal detachment?
- Is the patient otherwise acting healthy?
- Systemic workup WNL?

- Is the patient acting otherwise sick?
- Workup abnormalities?
- Petechiae? Bruising?
- Hypertensive?
- Ocular causes ruled out?

Not sure or worried? Call or email us!
We are always happy to help!

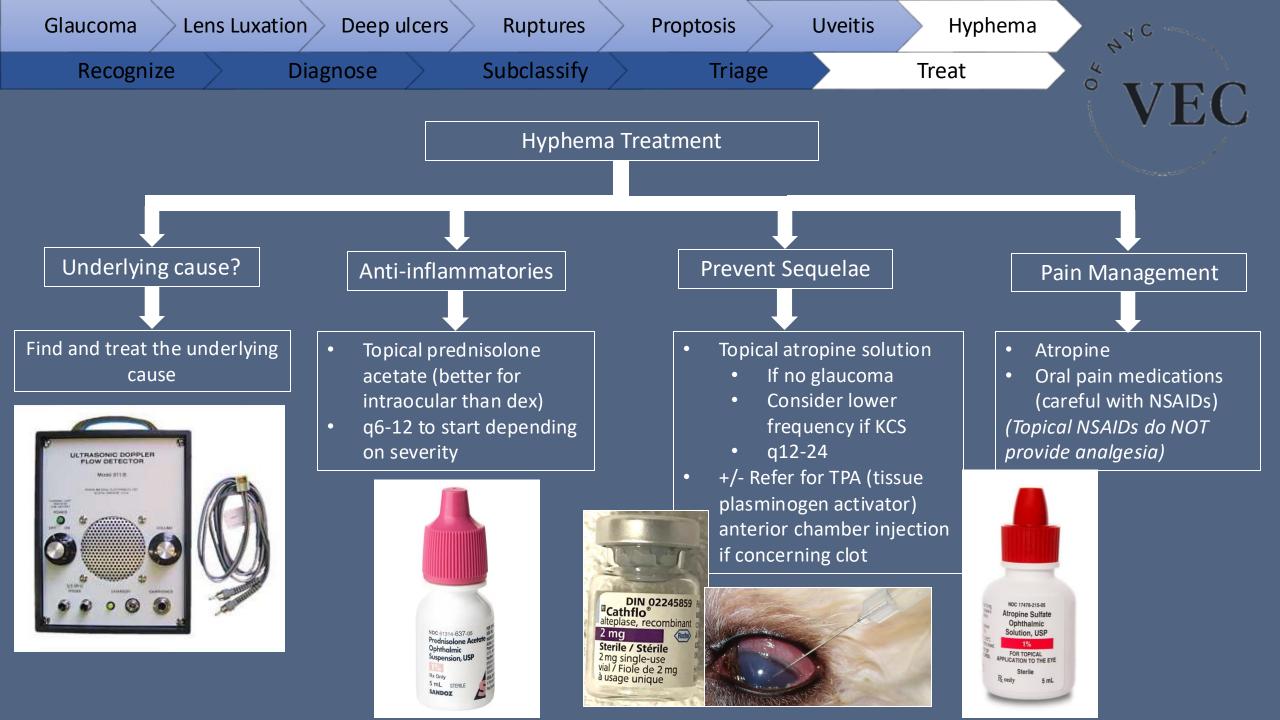
Recognize Diagnose Subclassify Triage Treat

# 40

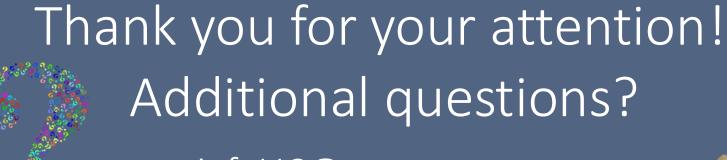
#### How emergent are uveitis cases?

- All cases warrant treatment immediately
- May indicate life-threatening clotting abnormality, severe hypertension, or other serious systemic disease
- Chronicity → Permanent changes in the eye and glaucoma
  - High risk of glaucoma and pain
- The more severe the hyphema, the more emergent in general









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