



POST-OPERATIVE ENUCLEATION

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Enucleation is the surgical removal of an eye that has lost vision, is non-functional, or is a chronic (long-term) source of pain and discomfort for the patient.

Any number of conditions may warrant **enucleation**, which may include:

- Direct trauma – an infected scratch or ulcer, puncture or laceration, proptosis (eye out of socket), etc.
 - Please see the [Corneal Ulceration](#) document for additional information.
- Glaucoma – if unmanageable or poorly managed
 - Please see the [Glaucoma](#) document for additional information.
- Severe herpes-related corneal ulcers (feline patients)
 - Please see the [Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis](#) or [Corneal Ulceration](#) documents for additional information.
- Cancer of the eye
- Blastomycoses infection of the eye
 - Please see the [Blastomycosis](#) document for additional information.

As long as the other eye can still see, there are not likely to be any serious handicaps. The pet will not be able to see on the **enucleation** side and may bump into objects and may be easily startled when approached from that side. Otherwise, once healing is complete, life can return to normal. If the pet has a condition that endangers the remaining eye, be sure to maintain preventive measures recommended by the veterinarian.

SURGICAL TREATMENT

In surgery, the entire eye and surrounding tissues are removed, and the eyelids are then sutured together. The eyelids and surrounding area will be swollen but will reduce in the 1-2 weeks following surgery. Some bruising is normal, especially in trauma cases.

In the end, most patients visually appear as if they simply have their eye closed on one side.

POST OPERATIVE MANAGEMENT

In most circumstances, patients lost sight before surgery was elected. Due to this, many will adjust well following an **enucleation**. In trauma causes, patients may require an adjustment period. Be sure to approach patients from the side that still retains vision to help reduce startling.

Surgical site management is often minimal but placing cold compresses every 4-6 hours for the first 3-5 days after surgery will help reduce inflammation. In more painful cases, please stay safe if placing a cold compress elicits a painful or reactive response from the patient.

Please be sure to administer medications as directed by the veterinary staff.

While stitch removal is unlikely to be necessary, be sure to have your patient rechecked in _____ days to ensure proper healing is taking place. If you notice any excessive swelling or discharge, please seek immediate veterinary examination.