

HOW TO ADMINISTER EYE MEDICATION TO YOUR DOG

General Practice & Preventative Medicine - Ophthalmology

GIVING EYE MEDICATION

Frequently, your veterinarian prescribes medication for your dog after an eye examination. Administering these medications can sometimes be difficult. Some dogs, especially if their eyes are painful, are resistant to the administration of medication. Diligence and patience are necessary to help give the medication. There are several techniques that may facilitate giving eye medication (drops or ointment) to your pet.

METHOD 1

- Have someone restrain your dog by holding the front legs and chest, or if the dog is small, wrap him firmly in a blanket or towel.
- Place the medication in your dominant hand with the lid off.
- If you are right-handed and the right eye needs medication, rest your right hand on top of the head in order to stabilize your hand. Your hand should be near the inner side of the eye closest to the nose. With your left hand, place the thumb near the lower eyelid and the forefinger near the upper eyelid. This also works if you are left-handed and the dog needs medication in his left eye.
- If you are right-handed and the left eye needs medication, stand on the right side of the dog, facing the same direction as the dog. With the medication in your right hand, rest this hand on top of the head to stabilize. Reach across the dog and place the index finger of your left hand near the lower eyelid and your left thumb near the upper eyelid. This also works if you are left-handed and the right eye needs medication.
- Spread the eyelids apart using your thumb and forefinger.
- Apply the medication directly on the surface of the eye or into the small gap between the lower eyelid and the surface of the eye. Take care not to touch the surface of the eye with the tip of the medication container.
- Once the medication has been administered, open and close the eyelid one or two times with your thumb and forefinger in order to spread the medication over the entire surface of the eye.

METHOD 2

- If the eye medication is ointment, gently squeeze about 1/8" out the end of the tube. Hold the dog's head with your free hand, and with the other hand, touch the crease in the eyelids closest to the nose with the tube of medication. The spot to aim for is the point where the two eyelids meet. The dog will blink the exposed ointment off the tip of the tube.
- The third eyelid sits in this same area and will move upward when the corner of the eyelids is touched and will prevent the tube from touching the cornea.
- The same method can be used at the outside corner of the eyelids, but there is no third eyelid in this area, so you must be careful not to touch the cornea with the tube.
- After administering the ointment, wipe the tip of the tube with a fresh Kleenex or piece of cotton and replace the cap.

METHOD 3

- If the eye medication is a solution, and if your dog objects to having the medication dropped directly onto the surface of the eye or objects to having the eyelids opened, then simply hold the dog's head in an upward position and make him look towards the ceiling.
- Approach the eye with the bottle of medication, from either the front of the head or over the top of the back of the head. As the bottle gets closer to the eye, the dog often closes its eyes. Drop a single drop of medication onto the crease where the eyelids touch and come together.
- Continue to hold the head in an upward position for a full minute after the drop is applied to the crease. Gravity will cause the solution to ooze slowly downward through the small gap in the eyelids.
- With this method, some of the solution may be lost onto the skin around the eye, but the dog may tolerate this method better.

FOLLOWING ADMINISTRATION OF THE MEDICATIONS

- Don't forget to praise your dog for his patience and good behavior.
- Give him a treat after the medication or some toy that will serve as a reward for cooperating with you.