



By your veterinary ophthalmologist

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Follicular conjunctivitis

What is a follicular conjunctivitis ?

Follicular conjunctivitis (inflammation of the thin membrane that covers the white part of the eye) is often, but not always associated with seasonal allergies. The conjunctivitis results from exposure to environmental allergens (such as pollens and grasses), rather than to viral or bacterial infections. Younger dogs and larger dog breeds less than 2 years of age tend to be the most commonly affected.

Dogs with very large eyelid openings, “droopy” eyelids or deep-set eyes can have more conjunctival surfaces exposed to dirt, pollen and plant debris resulting in conjunctival irritation. Most animals respond to a treatment combination of saline irrigation (especially after outdoor activities) and ophthalmic corticosteroid medications. Saline irrigation of the eyes can significantly decrease the severity of the condition. Irrigating the eyes with saline effectively rinses away antigens adherent to the conjunctival surfaces and those entrapped in conjunctival creases. In mild cases, topical antihistamines and agents that stabilize mast cell membranes can be quite effective. Severely affected eyes may also benefit from manual debridement of thickened conjunctiva in order to improve responsiveness to topical medications.

