

Cat Conjunctivitis



What causes it?

Conjunctivitis in cats is most commonly caused by an infection. Infectious agents include Feline HerpesVirus, Calicivirus, Chlamydiophila, Mycoplasma, and others that are less common. Other possible causes include allergies, tear film deficiencies, exposure to irritating substances, immune-mediated diseases, and others.

What are the signs?

The signs vary depending on the cause of conjunctivitis. In addition to the redness of the conjunctiva, one may observe discharge from the eyes, ulcers, swelling of the conjunctiva, pain, sneezing, nasal discharge, and occasionally painful ulcers in the mouth.

How do we determine the cause?

We can collect a sample from the eyes and throat to test for the most common virus that causes conjunctivitis. This needs to be collected under brief sedation.

How is it treated?

The treatment depends on the cause and may include topical medications (eye drops or ointments) and/or oral medications. In some cases, the disease can be cured; however, in other cases, it can be controlled but not cured as some cats will carry the virus for life. If the cornea is damaged, surgery may be required.

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