

Pigmentary Uveitis in Golden Retrievers

Uveitis is defined as inflammation of the uveal tract, which includes the iris or “colored part of the eye”. There are many causes for uveitis which include certain infections, cataracts, immune-mediated disease, and cancer.

There is also a form of uveitis (believed to be hereditary) that occurs in the Golden Retriever breed called Pigmentary Uveitis, and it can result in vision loss. In the early stages, Pigmentary Uveitis does not appear serious. The dog may have some redness around the eye and/or some discharge. Often times, the disease has progressed to an advanced stage before affected dogs visit a veterinarian.

The average age of affected dogs is about 8 years old, with a range from 4 to 14 years. The majority of dogs are affected in both eyes. Some of the key features of this condition are pigment dispersion across the front surface of the lens and the presence of one or more uveal cysts within the eye. Fibrin (inflammatory material) is sometimes found within the eye and can be a precursor for impeding glaucoma.

Glaucoma and cataract formation are the most common complications of the Golden Retriever Uveitis condition. The cataracts that form with this condition are problematic because they are not the ideal candidates for cataract surgery. Glaucoma can rapidly (within days) result in permanent vision loss. It can be painful and not always controllable with medical therapy.

The prognosis for dogs affected with this condition is guarded. With early detection, consistent therapy, and regular monitoring, some affected dogs will go years without major complications and with maintenance of vision. But there are some dogs with more advanced forms, or stages of the condition where it fails to respond to therapy and vision cannot be saved.

Screening for the disease is available. However, it can only be done by a Veterinary Ophthalmologist. The name of the screening is the Cerf Test. While it is an expensive procedure, so it is important to first discuss with your regular veterinarian if you notice redness or drainage in your eyes. Remember, early detection is the key to controlling the disease. For more information, click [PIGMENTARY UVEITIS STUDY](#).