

Ophthalmology Snapshot

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History

A stray kitten with unknown age had presented to the Ophthalmology Clinic, Animal Teaching Hospital, Faculty of Veterinary Science, Chulalongkorn University. The owner rescued him from a bush nearby a road. He barely survived due to severe respiratory tract infection. After he had been treated and stronger, the owner noticed that the kitten

bumped into objects when walking. Eyes were not recognized.

Abnormal membranes covering both of his eyes were revealed from ophthalmic examination. Menace responses were negative. Dazzle reflexes were positive. There was no ocular discharge nor lacrimation. The kitten was quite alert. An attempt to examine both cornea was unsuccessful.

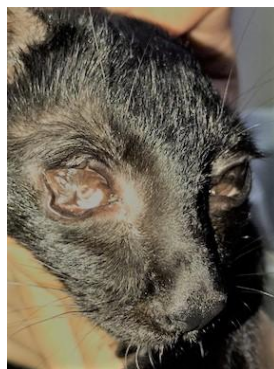


Figure 1 Right eye of the kitten
(For better quality of photographs, please visit the TJVM website)

Question

Give ophthalmic diagnosis.

Please turn to next page for the answer.

Answer

Symblepharon

Comments

Symblepharon is a condition when the internal aspect of the eyelid is adhered to the eyeball at any part. Symblepharon is caused by various factors; strong irritation, severe burn, diffuse ulcerative lesion of the eyelid or any consequences of a damage of palpebral conjunctiva. These causes lead to a complete removal of the conjunctiva or a denudation. Adhesion occurs as a result of healing process. Cicatricial tissue following granulation and fibrosis is the reason of firm attachment among eyelid and other parts of the eyeball. Severity of symblepharon depends on strength of the cause, length of time that cause has been activated and area that conjunctiva has directly been contacted to irritation.

Feline herpesvirus is the significant cause of symblepharon in cats. Virus is transmitted via respiratory and urogenital routes. It is endemic within cat population. Kittens are mainly affected while adults are subclinical. Adhesion of erosive ocular surface can be classified as mild, moderate and severe. Eyelid is freely moved in mild degree while in moderate degree, part of the eyelid adheres to other parts of the eyeball. In severe cases, eyelid is firmly adhered to other ocular adnexa; permanent eyelid immobility. If corneal epithelial cells are lysed, conjunctivalization occurs resulting in corneal scarification. Loss of vision depends on disease severity. Some may develop anterior staphyloma.

Reference

- Andrew SE, 2001. Ocular manifestations of feline herpesvirus. *J Feline Med Surg.* 3(1): 9-16.
Jacobi S and Dubielzig RR, 2008. Feline early life ocular disease. *Vet Ophthalmol.* 11(3): 166-169.