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# JAR's

## Blindness in Dogs

### What Is Blindness?

Blindness is a partial or total loss of vision that can be present from birth or happen suddenly due to injury or illness, or gradually due to old age or progressive diseases such as cataracts, retinal degeneration and glaucoma.

### How Can I Tell If My Dog's Vision Is Failing?

Gradual loss of vision can be hard to detect, but here are a few signs:

- Misjudging heights and bumping into walls, furniture or other objects
- Confusion in new surroundings
- Reluctance to move from one spot
- Not being able to find food and water bowls
- General clumsiness and disorientation
- Easily startled
- Eye rubbing or squinting
- Cloudy, discolored, inflamed or tearing eyes and a large pupil

### What Causes Blindness In Dogs?

Though blindness can be a congenital condition or part of the aging process, the following conditions can also lead to vision loss in dogs:

- Progressive retinal atrophy
- Suddenly acquired retinal degeneration syndrome
- Collie eye anomaly
- Retinal dysplasia and detachment
- Diabetes mellitus

- Stroke
- Untreated eye infections
- Glaucoma
- Dry eye syndrome
- Retinal pigment epithelial dystrophy
- Cataracts
- Uveodermatologic syndrome

### How Is Blindness Diagnosed?

Your vet can give your dog a preliminary exam and, if necessary, recommend a veterinary ophthalmologist who will perform a complete exam, during which he'll look closely at a dog's retina and the outer parts of his eye.

### Which Dogs Are Prone To Blindness?

Elderly dogs of all breeds can suffer from vision loss. Progressive retinal atrophy is most common in cocker spaniels, collies, Irish setters, Norwegian elkhounds, schnauzers and poodles, but can affect any breed. Collie eye anomaly usually affects collie breeds and retinal dysplasia is commonly seen in beagles and Labrador retrievers. Breeds that are predisposed to glaucoma include American cocker spaniels, basset hounds, Chow Chows and Labrador retrievers.

### How Can I Create a Safe, Fulfilling Environment for My Blind Dog?

You can help your dog feel secure in his surroundings by providing a stable, accident-free environment.



## Jaiya's Animal Rescue

**Website:** <http://jargroup.doodlekit.com>  
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- Give extra attention and TLC, especially for elderly pets.
- Avoid moving the furniture.
- Don't leave boxes, toys or other objects in walking paths.
- Cover sharp corners and objects with soft insulation.
- Speak to your dog when you enter the room and before petting or touching him.
- Let him smell visitors' hands before they touch him.
- Mark different rooms with different scents so that your dog can use his sense of smell to recognize where he is.
- Mark the tops and bottoms of staircases with a bit of perfume.
- Use rugs to texture rooms, allowing your dog to use his sense of touch to get his bearings.
- Carry or lead your dog up and down stairs and block access to them when you're not using them.
- Place barriers around hot tubs, pools and other dangerous and off-limits areas.
- Make sure she has her own safe place she can get to easily.
- Buy toys with sound and scent.
- Keep food and water bowls in the same place.
- Be very vocal and be aware of your different tones.
- Don't baby or pity your dog—simply help him adjust.

### How Can Blindness Be Prevented?

Pet parents should not let eye infections go untreated and any signs of diabetes should be investigated. Cataracts should also be monitored by a veterinarian.

### Can Blind Dogs Ever Get Their Vision Back?

Loss of vision in dogs can be reversible, depending on the cause. Cataracts, which cause mild to total vision loss, can be removed by surgery. Veterinary ophthalmologists commonly perform cataract removals and are able to restore vision in their canine patients.

### When Is It Time To See The Vet?

Immediately! If you even have a small suspicion your dog's eyesight might be failing, see your vet right away. Very often, one eye will fail first and the other will compensate, which makes it difficult to tell there is any loss of vision. If you see any changes in your dog's orientation or ability to locate places and objects, go for a check-up.



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