

## Ferret With Blurred, Fishy Eye

### **What would cause a ferret to have blurry, fishy eyes?**

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**Q:** My ferret has some kind of eye disease. His right eye is blurred and fishy. He keeps it half opened. Please help me and my ferret to solve this problem.

**A:** When you look at a ferret's eye and it appears "blurry," meaning you cannot easily see the dark pupil, only a few things can cause this appearance.

One possibility is an infection causing mucus-like discharge from the structures around the eye, including the conjunctiva. This can be painful and cause your ferret to keep his eye only partially opened. The technical term for partially keeping the lids open is blepharospasm.

Another cause of "blurry eyes" can be swelling in the cornea. The cornea is the clear structure that covers the eye. If the cornea is diseased, one response of the cornea is to swell with fluid and inflammatory cells, which causes the cornea to appear opaque and the eye looks blurry.

If there are ulcers in the cornea, this causes pain and blepharospasm.

Finally, if infection or inflammation is present in the fluid behind the cornea, then the eye appears opaque or not clear. This can be very painful, and your ferret may hold his eye closed.

Each one of these conditions can have different causes, and each cause is treated differently. Some of the treatments include topical antibiotics over the eye, oral antibiotics, topical non-steroidal products, oral steroids, shields for the cornea, and even surgery to repair non-healing ulcers.

To determine how best to treat your ferret, visit your veterinarian. Usually, it is not difficult for a veterinarian to tell which of these conditions exist.

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