

OCULAR AND PERIOcular NEOPLASIA

WHAT IS NEOPLASIA?

Neoplasia is more commonly known as cancer. A variety of neoplasia can be associated with the eye including squamous cell carcinoma, sarcoid, melanoma, lymphoma, papilloma, and numerous others. The most common ocular and periocular neoplasia in horse is a squamous cell carcinoma.

WHAT CAUSES NEOPLASIA?

Neoplasia usually occurs due to genetic predisposition and can be influenced by environmental factors like UV light exposure and lack of eyelid pigmentation in the case of squamous cell carcinoma.

SIGNS THAT YOUR HORSE MAY HAVE NEOPLASIA

The most noticeable clinical signs associated with neoplasia is a physical mass. Other signs can include subtle thickening of tissue and ulceration of the skin.

DIAGNOSIS OF NEOPLASIA

The diagnosis is based upon ophthalmic exam and biopsy. When biopsies are submitted that can take up to 1-2 weeks for results from the pathologist. Accurate diagnosis is important when determining the correct treatment plan.

TREATMENT FOR NEOPLASIA

Medical treatment is based on the tumor type. It is usually some sort of chemotherapy agent applied topically or injected intralesional. Response to chemotherapy is very tumor and patient specific and treatment course varies.

Surgical treatment is the most common way ocular and periocular neoplasia is treated. Treatment often consists of tumor removal or debulking and some sort of adjunctive therapy like cryotherapy, hyperthermia, laser, radiation or photodynamic therapy. Response to therapy is very patient specific and at this time, no therapy is 100% effective in all cases. Long term follow up is needed in most cases to look for signs of tumor recurrence.

Unfortunately some tumors are not amenable to treatment due to their size and location. Eye removal, and potential removal of periocular tissue, may be needed for long term health of the patient.