

# A Thorough Check on your Yorkshire Terrier's Health

About **Yorkshire terrier health**, there is a health check we yorkie owners should assess from time to time.

**Body condition.** You should just be able to feel the ribs and no more, there should be a 'waist' between the ribs and hips, the tummy should not sag, either.

**Ears.** The ears should be clear of any thick, brown or green wax. Ears should not be smelly. Yorkies benefit greatly from regular cleaning with special ear cleaners. Be careful what you use to clean the ears as the skin is very sensitive.

**Eyes.** The eyes should be bright and clear, not runny, no redness or soreness. Your yorkie should not shy away from light as if it hurts his eyes.

**Nose.** No crusting of surface, no runny discharges or bleeding – it doesn't have to be cold or wet. Noses can change from black to pink, and back again – this can vary through the year.

**Breath.** Bad breath can mean digestive upset or bad teeth. Your yorkie's teeth should be white with no excess tartar. This looks thick and brown. Gums should be pink, not red or swollen.

**Skin and Coat.** Your yorkie's skin should be free of any scruffy dandruff or sores. Skin can be pink or black, depending on the pigments normally found in your pet's skin. The coat should be thick and shiny with no broken hairs.

**Nails.** The nails should be smooth and can be white or black. Nails which are roughened and break easily may require attention. When checking the nails, remember the dew claws which are found on the inside of the leg just below the wrist – some yorkies have these on the front legs only, some have them on front and back, and some have none at all.

**Digestion.** Is your yorkie's appetite normal? This can be difficult to tell if the dog is new to you and is very fussy. There should be no sickness or choking when eating. Stools should be of normal color, with no diarrhea or constipation and no mucus passed.

**Thirst.** Any changes in thirst maintained over a period of time that cannot be explained by hot weather or increasing exercise is cause for a vet check-up.

**Attitude.** Your yorkie's general attitude to life can tell you so much. A dog that is feeling unwell will have its head down, often tail down, may sulk in corners or even dig a hole in the garden and then lie in it.

# **The Older Yorkie's Musculoskeletal System Illnesses**

The yorkie's musculoskeletal system is composed of muscles, bones, and ligaments, as well as tendons. The entire system is built to withstand life's wear and tear.

It will also show changes due to illnesses, cancer, and simple old age-related syndromes such as arthritis and spondylosis. Muscle atrophy results from disuse due to pain and/ or discomfort. Swelling can occur from arthritis, tumours, or injury.

Changes in overall form such as a swelling abdomen, narrowing of the hips, or sagging of the muscles can be symptoms of a kidney or liver dysfunction. The worst case scenario can be a stroke or metastasized cancer.

Arthritis occurs in the old yorkie's joints due to previous injury, age-related bone changes, or lack of specific nutrients throughout his life.

Inflammation occurs when the synovial fluid – the fluid between the joints used to cushion the bones – increases production due to an overactive immune system that tries to lubricate an area due to abnormal bone changes.

Arthritis can occur in any joint, but it is most prevalent in areas formally injured. Long-term infections can also cause arthritis. For example, a yorkie has repeated abscesses on his elbow. Within a few years, arthritis will develop in that elbow.

This dysfunction can also be genetic, showing up as your yorkie enters his senior year.

Once arthritis is diagnosed through radiographs and fluid evaluation, treatment often consists of anti-inflammatory drugs, muscle relaxants, and the daily use of the nutraceuticals glycosamine sulfate and chondroitin, which help maintain a regular level of synovial fluid. Collagen is also used to maintain proper moisture and build up the cartilage around degenerating bones.

While there is no cure for spinal arthritis, there is hope and surgery for arthritis of the hips and joints. Acupuncture and chiropractic have also proven helpful in pain control.

Spondylosis involves the degeneration of the spinal cord and discs. Bony outgrowths appear along the spine and interfere with the nerves. Occasionally, very old smaller dogs like Yorkshire terriers will succumb to spondylosis.

The yorkie with spondylosis may show no signs for years until the problem is very advanced. Initially, the yorkie may be stiff, and then tend to fall a lot or be unable to stand on uneven ground. Eventually, the yorkie is paralyzed in the hind leg.

Once spondylosis is diagnosed with radiographs, anti-inflammatory drugs are used to decrease the pain. Sometimes steroids injected directly into the afflicted area reduce swelling and allow more functionality. No cure has been known for this disease.

## **Olfactory Problems Suffered by Older Yorkies**

While there are many ways to slow down the aging process or to make certain that your older yorkie isn't affected by preventable physical ailments, there is no way for you to rebuild aged internal systems.

The older yorkie's body will inevitably break down, but knowing the first signs of olfactory loss may help both you and your dog overcome and prepare for life's changes.

A dog's sense of smell may also deteriorate with age. Your old yorkie's nose operates on two levels. The first level filters and warms the air before it reaches the respiratory tree. This is done by the turbanites fold in the nasal passages rich in blood vessels.

The second function of the dog's nose is their incredible ability to detect the minutest odours. This ability to smell and differentiate odours has long been used in hunting, scenting activities such as search and rescue, narcotics detection, and obedience trials.

Scent is the dog's prime means of differentiating people, places, and other animals. They know the physiological and mental state of all living things that they detect.

Can you imagine taking one whiff of something and knowing who left the odour, when they left it, and what they were thinking at the time?

Your old yorkie pet's sense of smell is also closely associated with appetite. Thus, if he has nasal problems, he will most likely not eat well.

Rhinitis, on the other hand, is caused by bacterial infections, tumours, foreign bodies, and exposure to toxic chemicals or trauma. Rhinitis is the most common age-related nasal dysfunction.

Its symptoms include nasal discharge, sneezing, and gagging due to post-natal drip. In treating rhinitis, you must first determine if there is an underlying condition causing the problem. This is done through a physical examination, radiographs, and visual examination of the nasal passages.

Often, in the case of infection, antimicrobial drugs, and anti-inflammatory drugs will be used. In the case of obstruction, surgery can often restore complete sensory ability. However, age-related illnesses often result in permanent olfactory loss.

In such case, you can boost your old yorkie's appetite by offering stronger-smelling foods. Heating his food also helps release a stronger aroma.

Never allow him to roam free because he has lost his ability to sense danger before it arrives, such as an aggressive dog or wild animal. Sometimes a dog without the ability to smell may become aggressive if surprised or in the presence of danger.

# **The Older Yorkshire Terriers' Reproductive Problems**

The best means of preventing problems in the reproductive system is to neuter or spay your dog. Old male yorkies can suffer from perineal hernias, prostate cancer, hormone imbalances, infections, and testicular cancer.

Aged female yorkies can also have hormone imbalances, infections, uterine cancer, pyometra, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer. You can prevent a lot of pain and heartache by removing the reproductive system of your pet.

Pyometra is an inflammation in the lining of the uterus. The uterus becomes distended with fluid and inflamed tissues. Pyometra can be caused by diabetes mellitus, kidney malfunction, venereal disease, abnormal pregnancies or births, or from hormones used to prevent pregnancies.

Symptoms include distended uterus, abnormal thirst, vomiting, and dehydration are all signs of pyometra. If the disease advances, the dog will have a fever and loss of appetite.

In treating this, first, the older yorkie is neutered so that the disease cannot occur. Secondly, antibiotics and intravenous fluid is used to rehydrate the dog. This is a very serious disorder in older dogs and, if not, treated, can prove fatal.

As old male yorkies age, they become susceptible to prostrate inflammation and infections. They are also prone to tumours, both malignant and benign. Either way, the dog becomes uncomfortable and has difficult time passing urine.

The old yorkie will be straining when he urinates and may have thin bloody stools, abnormal pain, and weakness in the hind end. Recurring urinary tract infections also signify a prostrate problem.

Once diagnosed through radiographs and urine analysis, if a tumour is present, it is removed. If the problem is due to an infection, then the old yorkie is given antibiotics and the infected area is surgically drained. Neutering is done to prevent future problems.

In hormonal imbalances, this disease normally has an underlying cause, such as thyroid problems. The thyroid gland may be impacted, sending mixed messages to the hormone-producing organs.

Its symptoms are similar to thyroid symptoms, with abnormal hair loss, horrific skin odour, the skin becoming dark and thick, and the old yorkie becoming sensitive to the cold.

Hormone imbalances are easily treated with replacement therapy and neutering. Bathing your old yorkie with special shampoo will stimulate hair growth and keep his skin soft.

Daily thyroid pills will keep the problem under control. The old yorkie should maintain a normal activity level to keep his muscles strong and healthy.

## **Heart Problems in Older Yorkies**

Diabetes occurs when age-related changes in the pancreas cause inadequate production of insulin. Blood sugar rises, causing sugar levels to rise in the urine. Thus, the sugar is not being fully absorbed by the body, causing insulin shock.

A yorkie with diabetes will exhibit weight loss despite a good appetite. He'll drink more and urinate more as well. Treatment is usually a daily dose of insulin, as well as a high-fiber diet. He will need to be watched carefully for secondary dysfunctions associated with diabetes such as glaucoma, cataracts, pancreatitis, and other infections.

Diagnosis is easily done with a blood analysis and radiograph. There are medications available for all of these conditions. It is not known how fast or slow a dysfunction will advance. This may depend on outside influences such as proper diet, exercise, and low stress.

Heart and lung problems are not common in older yorkies and can be the most difficult problems to diagnose and treat.

Due to advances in veterinary science, most of the causes of heart attacks, such as heartworm infestation, can be prevented. However, germs can infiltrate the cardiovascular system through improper dental care, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and fibrotic lung disease.

Though they do occur, heart attacks are not common in canines.

The older yorkie may breathe rapidly or sound forced because he can't seem to catch his breath. He may be lethargic and tired, not wishing to exercise. A harsh cough can sometimes be symptomatic of a heart problem.

If the condition worsens, you can detect a bluing of the tongue and absolute refusal to move. Once diagnosed through blood test, radiographs, and physical examination, most conditions are treated with medication.

If the heart is unable to function on its own, a pacemaker can be installed. Proper diet is also helpful. There are ways to make your yorkie more comfortable, but there is no cure.

Cushing's disease occurs when the adrenal gland produces too many hormones due to a tumour in the pituitary gland. Though most of tumours in these areas are benign, they still cause inflammation and need to be removed.

Symptoms include weakness, bulging eyes, increased appetite and thirst, bulging abdomen, and loss of coat. Cushing's disease is easily treated by removing the tumor or using medication to counteract the effects. Most dogs return to some semblance of normalcy, although they still need to be closely observed and allowed outside more often.

## **Basic Exercises for the Older Yorkie**

As a regular routine, the older yorkie should be allowed outside for at least twenty minutes of exercise twice a day. This exercise time can consist of a walk, play time, or training time.

Yep, dogs still should be trained when they are old because they enjoy the mind stimulation. If the old yorkie becomes stiff the next day, reduce your walking speed or the amounts of time you make him change positions.

Allow him to perform his commands at a slower pace. Be patient. It takes a little longer for those old bones to work.

If the older yorkie has severe arthritis or a heart condition, he can still benefit from walking down to the mailbox and back. He'll enjoy sniffing the air and listening to the sounds of nature.

Your older yorkie dog will most enjoy spending the time with you – the golden years are when we take time to smell the roses.

The types of exercise depend largely on the older yorkie's condition. As he ages, he will be prone to arthritis and more susceptible to injury, so you don't want to make him perform the same duties as when he was younger.

For example, he may have run with you five miles per day. One morning, he wakes up a bit stiff. He can't do the same distance anymore. Begin reducing the distance and when even that causes stiffness, slow down the gait.

It might help to run on a softer surface. When even that proves too much, do the exercise at a walk. Walking is less jarring, offering low impact aerobic conditioning while continuing the maintenance of good muscle tone.

If the older yorkie has been involved in obedience or agility, he can still perform these things, only the obstacles will need to be lowered to accommodate him. The older yorkie dog loves doing these exercises and you should still offer him the opportunity, just make sure it doesn't harm him in the long run.

Say, lower a jump height or reduce the amount of times you expect him to change his body position. Older dogs can perform a stay exercise far better than a younger dog, so while you work with a younger sibling – have the older yorkie do a long stay.

This is equally beneficial because your old yorkie is happily working while providing a distraction for the younger dog.

## **Older Yorkies Should Have Fun, Too!**

Provided that the older yorkie dog is healthy, he will be able to do anything a younger dog can do.

Dogs are not aware that they are old and some maintain an active lifestyle even if they suffer from the early stages of dysfunction such as arthritis or kidney disease.

Unlike people, dogs age gracefully, not worried about a few gray hairs or the loss of coat. They don't care about a few calluses at the elbows, or teeth that are no longer full and bright.

As long as the old yorkie has the energy level and desire to exercise, he should be given time each day to do so. Exercise promotes a healthier and longer life, as well as helps you relieve yourself of the daily stresses.

What can be more fun than going for a run or playing ball with your best friend? Worries? Cares? They're gone in a flash of the old yorkie's grin and wag of his tail.

Never make up excuses to avoid that walk around the block or run through the park. Weather conditions and your own exhaustion from work mean nothing to a dog that has maintained this routine his entire life. Exercise and stimulation keep our pets' minds occupied and bodies healthy.

A yorkie that only lies around soon becomes overweight and lethargic. His life is dull, offering little or no stimulation. This alone can cause the older yorkie dog's body to break down. Obesity can either cause or exacerbate already existing conditions.

Dogs also need an occasional change in atmosphere. This can consist of playing with him at the park or simply walking with him down the street. Daily walks or exercise times give the older yorkie something to look forward to.

The ideal type of exercise for an old dog is being allowed to play with other dogs. It will put new life in him, making him feel young at heart. However, the amount of exercise and with whom depends on his state of health.

You don't want to put your older yorkie with a bunch of rambunctious puppies if he has advanced arthritis, or is recovering from surgery. You will also want to make sure that he wants the company.

Play and exercise in older yorkies should not be denied to them – as both can help them to keep in shape, even in old age.

## **Digestive System Dysfunctions in Older Yorkies**

The digestive system begins with the mouth and ends at the anus. There are miles of organs in between that are affected by many age-related ailments.

The pancreas, liver, and gall bladder are accessories to the digestive system because they help with the creation of hormone production and enzymes to help break down foods and nutrients.

You should be very aware of your older yorkie dog's proper dental maintenance to prevent periodontal disease, which is characterized by swollen gums, deteriorating teeth, and bad breath. If left untreated, it can cause tooth loss and secondary organ infections.

Smaller dogs like Yorkshire terriers tend to be affected by this problem more often than larger dogs. A regular professional cleaning and scaling by a veterinarian will aid in preventing periodontal disease.

Proper diet is also important in preventing gum disease. A diet of meat and meat by-products has been known to lead to this disease. Older yorkies should be fed at least some dry foods to help break down plaque build-up on the gums and teeth.

Bloat is a disease that is often seen in deep-chested dogs. However, it can be seen in those dogs that tend to eat too fast and are high-strung. It occurs commonly when a dog eats too fast after a rigorous exercise.

Bloat is caused by a build-up of gases in the stomach, causing distension and the turning and twisting of the blood vessels, resulting on cutting off the blood flow. If not treated quickly, it can be fatal.

The most obvious signs of bloat are gross abdominal enlargement, and discomfort. An older yorkie may dry heave continually and not be able to catch his breath.

The older yorkie must be treated immediately; the stomach must be untwisted and tacked down. Gas must be extracted through a stomach tube or needle and medications administered to combat infection and shock.

The prognosis is not always good because the condition can reoccur if not checked. If the older yorkie survives his first week after the occurrence, he has a good chance of living through the experience. After recovery, surgery may be performed to permanently attach the stomach wall to the abdomen to prevent reoccurrence.

Always observe your older yorkie dog after he exercises and eats. Feed him two to three smaller meals each day instead of a large one. Limit his water after meals and exercise.

## **Liver Disease and Colitis in Older Yorkies**

Many canine diseases that affect aging Yorkshire terriers are indeed stress-related. A calm and happy home environment combined with good veterinary care will help keep your older yorkie dog healthy.

Liver helps the digestive system process food by storing vitamins and nutrients, and aiding in the breakdown of toxic by-products through its production of enzymes.

Liver also helps remove old blood cells and process them, as well as produce bile acids that are stored in the gall bladder and secreted into the intestine to aid digestion.

When the liver is inflamed, the condition is called hepatitis. This can occur from diabetes mellitus, infections, heart disease, poison, or malnutrition. If your older yorkie has repeated infections or assaults on the liver, a condition known as cirrhosis occurs.

In this situation, scar tissue replaces liver tissue, decreasing the size of the organ and reducing its functionality. Symptoms include loss of appetite, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, jaundice, anaemia, and distension of the abdomen. If the disease advances, seizures and death can result.

Treatment consists of first locating any underlying problems; second, taking steps to control the symptoms such as anti-vomiting medications, intravenous fluids, and, if the case has advanced to the point of anaemia, blood transfusion is needed.

Once stabilized, the older yorkie dog is put on regular antibiotics and a diet with high nutritional value. If he still has not continued to eat, he may be treated with an anabolic steroid to increase his appetite and metabolism.

Colitis is a common ailment in aging yorkie dogs. It can happen off and on, depending on the dog's diet and stress level. It can also be caused by polyps, tumours, foreign bodies such as parasites or immune system disorders.

This disease is identified by loose, bloody, and/ or stool streaked with mucous. Once colitis is diagnosed through endoscopy, if there is an obstruction – it is removed. If colitis is caused by simple intestinal dysfunction, the older yorkie dog is put on medication such as antibiotics.

Often, the medication need only be administered for a short period such as ten days. Should colitis again appear, medication is used again to further treatment.

Your older yorkie dog should be kept on a bland diet that is high in fibre. He should also live in a stress-free environment, because stress can cause colitis to reoccur.

## **Helpful Activities for Aged Yorkshire Terriers**

There are many jobs your aged Yorkshire terrier can perform better as older dog than he could as a bouncy puppy. One of these is therapy work.

This consists of going into nursing homes, hospitals, and retirement villages to offer residents the love and comfort of your wonderful dog. Many of these people had to give up their own beloved pets, and your older yorkie will give them a moment of fond memories.

Not only will it liven up the residents' lives, but the older yorkie will have a great time getting scratched and fussed over. How many dogs would not look forward to that? The older yorkie dog will be anxiously waiting at the door!

For your older yorkie to become a therapy dog, he must first receive basic obedience training so that he will sit still as he is being fawned over. He must also learn that jumping up is forbidden, as is rushing into people.

Learning how to perform the down/ stay command will also be helpful when being touched by children, and other people.

A few tricks that may be helpful to teach him are to lay his lead in a lap. While this trick may be natural for many dogs, others will need to be taught. Before starting anything, always begin with the basics – heel, sit, stay, down, come, and stand.

Once the older yorkie dog can perform this and other commands in the company of others, you can teach him anything. Most dogs will already know these behaviours and just need a little refresher course.

The easiest way new behaviour for your older yorkie to learn and the one that will earn him much affection is placing his head in a lap, or the "I'm so cute, you must pet me" trick. This is easily done with a bit of food.

Start by placing the older yorkie in a sit/ stay next to a chair. Sit in the chair and show him the food. Draw his attention to your lap by placing the food there. When his nose is stretching toward your lap, praise him and let him have the food.

Each time he comes closer to your lap, give him his reward. Always require more and more response from him before he gets the food – before you know it, his head is in your lap and he's getting the food himself.

## **Skin Allergies and Cancer in Older Yorkies**

As your older yorkie dog ages, his entire system will become more sensitive to his environment. Pollen, toxins, and parasites will affect him more than when he was younger.

Skin allergies can also occur when a yorkie is younger. These are usually allergies to inhalants, such as pollen. Flea allergies can also manifest themselves while the yorkie is young and become so bad that he loses his coat.

Contact allergies such as reactions to detergents, insecticides, or bedding can also erupt as your yorkie dog ages.

Symptoms include small, reddish bumps on the skin and constant rubbing of the nose and licking of paws or affected areas. Discomfort and thickening of the skin are also apparent.

Depending on the type of allergy, special shampoos can be used to relieve dermal itching. Anti-inflammatory drugs and steroids are used to reduce swelling. Antihistamines can be used if your older yorkie dog has an inhalant allergy.

Due to the detrimental effects of long-term steroid usage – especially in older dogs – it is best to first discover the reason behind the allergy and make sure the old yorkie isn't in contact with this irritation. Vitamin E is also helpful in maintaining moisture and elasticity in the skin.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in older dogs. It is characterized by a hard, lumpy growth and it needs to be removed immediately. Tumours in the urinary system are characterized by blood found in the urine.

Tumours in the gastrointestinal tract are characterized by bloody stool and straining as the older yorkie defecates. Brain or spinal cord tumours, whether benign or malignant, can cause severe behavioural abnormalities such as sudden aggression or constant crying.

Once cancer has spread through the body, the older yorkies muscles appear to atrophy. He may become thin and look as though he's wasting away. Depending on the type of cancer, his stomach may look distended, while the rest of him appears skeletal.

He'll have trouble relieving himself and may refuse to eat. Often, his skin will give off an offensive odour.

Once cancer is diagnosed, your older yorkie can be treated provided the cancer has not metastasized. Treatment usually consists of removal of the tumour, then chemotherapy, and/or radiation therapy.

The prognosis is good, provided the entire tumour has been removed.

## **Older Yorkies' Ear Problems**

A dog's hearing is one of the first things to degenerate with old age. Their ability to hear high and very low-pitched sounds becomes weaker as their nerve endings deteriorate.

This can be due to chronic ear infections or can simply be age-related.

The older yorkies ears have three parts: the outer ear or ear canal in which is separated by the tympanic membrane, which carries sounds to the third part – the eardrum, and this part communicates sounds to the nerve endings that carry them to the brain.

Any of these parts can be affected by age-related illnesses or by lack of proper care. Ear damage is irreversible.

Ear infections in older yorkie dogs are also the most common problem with them as they age. Infections can occur in the external or middle ear causing permanent damage. The cause of the infections can be bacteria, fungi, or yeast – all requiring different medications.

Early symptoms may cause the older yorkie to appear not to be listening well, or he may not know when a new person has arrived in the room. He may also show aggression when surprised.

Outer ear infection symptoms include smelly discharge, constant shaking of the head, and rubbing his ear on solid objects such as door frames and furniture. Pain is also associated with ear infections. If the problem is mites, then a dark, granular discharge will be seen.

Treatment: Ear drops and ointments applied several times a day usually clear up the infection. In the case of ear mites, an anti-parasite medication will be used. Often, ear infections are associated with other ailments such as hypothyroidism.

Inner ear infection symptoms: An afflicted old yorkie may tilt his head to the side and his facial muscles will appear relaxed, similar to the symptoms of a stroke. If the infection progresses, the dog may show loss of equilibrium, circle around a lot, and twitch his eyeballs.

Treatment: High doses of drugs used to combat the infection as well as anti-inflammatory drugs will be administered to decrease the swelling. Flushing affected mucous out of the ear may be done to initiate the treatment.

However, no matter how well the treatment proceeds, permanent hearing loss does result. Make sure that you walk your old yorkie dog on a leash. Speak louder or stomp your feet to vibrate the ground when you want his attention.

## **Common Eye Problems Found in Older Yorkies**

Before you can hope to understand how your older yorkies senses are affected by aging, you first need to understand how they work. Let's begin with canine eyes. They were designed to perceive forms and movement instead of distinct features.

Thus they can quickly detect movement, but cannot see contours. For example, while hunting a rabbit, they can first detect it with their nose, but can only see it if it moves.

Studies have shown that a dog's visual acuity can be compared during sunset. While they see some colors such as greens and yellows, they do not have as vivid a range as we do. As dogs age, the nerve sensitivity in the eyes is reduced, causing diminished sight.

In cataracts, the lens of the eye becomes opaque, blocking the flow of light to the retina. This may develop slowly over the course of several years and is not painful.

Symptoms: A gradual increase of haziness in eyeball. Sight slowly diminishes.

Treatment: One of the easiest eye conditions to treat. Once the cataracts have matured, they are easily removed through surgery and full eyesight is restored.

Glaucoma is the increase in fluid pressure within the eye. This problem can develop as a secondary dysfunction to cataracts, inflammation and allergies. Blindness can result from retina damage.

Symptoms: Reddened and inflamed eyes with a haze about the cornea and dilated pupils.

Treatment: Reduction of eye fluid should be instituted without delay. Initially, drugs can be used to reduce the inflammation and draw the fluid out of the eye and into the bloodstream. A long-term regimen of anti-inflammatory drugs should be administered.

If the drugs do not work, surgery might restore the older yorkies eyesight.

Dry eye is caused by a reduction in tear production that keeps the older yorkies eyes moist. This disease can dry the cornea, causing tissue damage and ulcerations. If left untreated, blindness results.

Dry eye can be a genetic dysfunction or occur in dogs with thyroid problems, autoimmune disease, or diabetes mellitus.

Symptoms: Greenish mucous discharge in and around both eyes, as well as ulcers on the surface that cause redness and pain. If this continues untreated, black spots will appear on the cornea.

Treatment: Tear replacement drops several times per day, antibiotics, and anti-inflammatory ointment is used to combat infection.