



Matthew J. Chavkin, DVM, MS
— Diplomate American College of Veterinary Ophthalmology

Tanja Nuhsbaum, DVM, MS
— Diplomate American College of Veterinary Ophthalmology

Caring for the Blind Pet

Blind dogs and cats can be very happy pets. Here are a few bits of advice that will make the transition easier:

1. Avoid changing your pet's environment, such as moving the furniture.
2. Encourage your pet to use his other senses to compensate for vision loss.
 - a. Provide toys that are noisy or have a recognizable odor.
 - b. Get a companion pet that your blind pet can follow around using hearing and smell.
3. If your pet is blind due to cataracts, it is wise to observe his eyes daily for changes that may indicate glaucoma or uveitis, which are painful. These changes include bloodshot eye, increased size of eye, pawing at or rubbing the eyes and change in position of the cataract.
4. Encourage exercise, whether in a fenced yard or on a leash.
5. Teach your pet the location of the food and water bowls and keep their location constant.
6. Some behavior changes (aggression, depression, fear, etc.) accompany sudden blindness. Avoid stressing or startling your pet. Inform family members (especially children) of the new condition.
7. Please feel free to contact Dr. Chavkin's office for advice regarding your specific circumstances.