

Pink Eye

Bovine contagious keratoconjunctivitis



WHAT

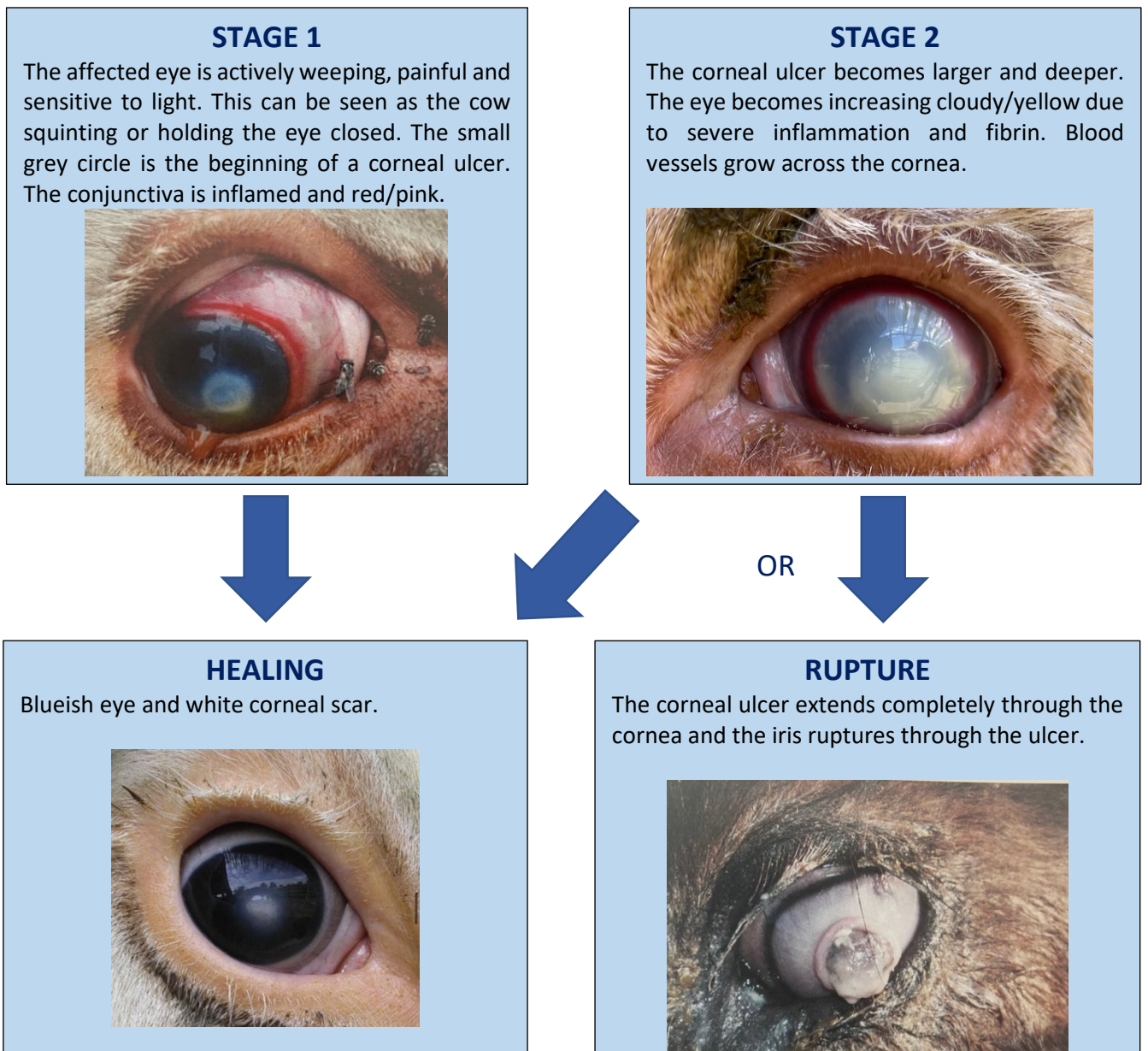
Pink eye is a common contagious bacterial ocular disease of cattle that can affect all ages, especially calves.

Dust, grass seeds, flies, bright sunlight, long grass, and pollens can injure cows' eyes during the summer months. Once the eye is compromised, different strains of *Moraxella* bacteria, most commonly *Moraxella bovis* that normally live on the cow, infect the eye causing corneal ulceration, pain and inflammation.

WHY WE CARE

Infected cattle can have decreased production and fertility. Cattle can become blind, deeming them unfit for sale. Pink eye causes SIGNIFICANT pain in affected stock and therefore has important animal welfare implications.

PROGRESSION OF DISEASE



HOW to TREAT

IMPORTANT:

- Always check that there is not a grass seed or foreign material in the eye before treating.
- Early intervention is critical to help prevent scaring
- Only treat eyes in stage 1 or 2 that are accompanied with active weeping.
- Applying treatment to healing corneal scars is not necessary.
- Injecting Alamyacin/Oxytet into the eye is NOT recommended.
- Powders and sprays are not as effective and can be painful when applied.

1. We recommend applying $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ tube of **Cloxacillin eye ointment** such as 'Opticlox' to the affected eye. Repeat for up to 3 treatments, 2 days apart.

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2. Apply an **eye patch**. Applying a patch improves cow comfort as they are sensitive to sunlight. It will also help prevent disease spread. Cut a square in an old pair of jeans or use pink eye patches. Apply liquid nails or similar glue to 2 sides of the patch like in Image 1. Glue the patch in a diamond shape to the cow over the affected eye like in Image 2. Leave the bottom edges unglued as this will allow drainage and give you the ability to lift the patch to administer follow up treatments and check the eye. Remove patch in 2 weeks.



Image 1. Applying liquid nails to 2 edges



Image 2. Applying patch. Stick glued edges above the eye.

PREVENTION

- Isolate affected cattle
- Control flies with backline products – available from your local livestock supplies store.
- Water down yards and laneways PRIOR to yarding cattle. This will decrease dust.
- Avoid overcrowding
- Slash long grass
- Coopers Piliguard pink eye vaccine – talk to your Vet

WHEN to CALL the VET

- If you are not sure
- If you have a cow with a ruptured eye or a cow whose eyelids can't close over a swollen eyeball.
- Herd outbreak - If a large portion of your herd has pink eye. In these cases, an alternative injectable antibiotic may be more appropriate.
- To discuss Coopers Piliguard pink eye vaccine