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## **Eyeworm Infection (Thelaziosis) in a Dog: A New Threat for Dogs in Turkey**

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** Canine thelaziosis caused by *Thelazia callipaeda* also referred to as ‘the oriental eye worm’ is increasingly common in Europe and infects dogs, cats, foxes, rabbits, and humans. Adult *T callipaeda* reside in the eyes and associated tissues. Infected animals show a variety of clinical presentations, from subclinical carriage through to mild (eg, epiphora, conjunctivitis and chemosis) and severe pathology including corneal ulceration.

**Case:** A 15 months-old male Sivas Kangal (50 kg) suffering from redness and conjunctivitis of both eyes presented to Clubvet/Istanbul on August 13, 2019. On clinical examination worms were detected on the conjunctiva of both eyes. Following sedation with xylazine intravenously (1 mg/kg body weight Rompun %2, 25 ml, Bayer) approximately 100 nematodes were manually recovered from beneath the nictitating membrane and conjunctival sac. Irrigation with %2-3 boric acid had been applied. Five nematodes were placed in a 10 per cent formalin solution and submitted to Merkez Lab for identification. A dose of 0.6 mg/kg of Ivermectin given subcutaneously (Avromec, Topkim), weekly for 3 weeks. A course of topical ofloxacin, one drop four times daily, (Exocin % 0.3 eye drops 5 ml, Allergan) and hyaluronic acid, one drop four times daily and oral meloxicam once daily (Boehringer) was prescribed and continued for a further seven days. Re-examination on 21 days post-treatment showed a significant improvement in ocular comfort with a regular blink rate and lack of ocular discharge. No further worms were identified by examination or flushing of the eyes or nasolacrimal ducts. No further problems have been reported since.

**In conclusion,** this canine ocular thelaziosis demonstrates the potential risks posed to the canine population in Turkey from infection with *T callipaeda*. Although effective diagnostic tests and treatments are available, more should be done to prevent this zoonotic pathogen from becoming endemic in Turkey.

**Keywords:** Dog, Ocular thelaziosis, *Thelazia callipaeda*, Sivas Kangal

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