



Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Squamous cell carcinoma is a common cancer of the skin and mouth in dogs and cats. The skin form is typically the result, as in people, of excessive sun exposure, but not necessarily sunburn.

Pre-cancer can start as red scaly patches that become non healing ulcers.

Typical areas are noses, corners of eyes and ear tips.

Skin cancers, when found less than 3mm in size are best frozen or surgically removed, and your veterinarian is typically the best person to do this, without the need for referral to a specialist.

However, in some situations your pet will benefit from the equipment or expertise available at the Murdoch Animal Cancer Care Unit.

When the cancer occurs in the mouth, it is not the result of sunlight exposure - the cause is unknown, though for cats has been associated with owners that smoke. In cats, the disease is particularly aggressive and generally not curable. Surgery can be done, but must be aggressive. Alternatively, injections of chemotherapy can often control the disease, and do not cause 'chemotherapy' side effects. For dogs, the prognosis can be better, and for some, cure is a likely outcome. Surgery may not even be necessary.