

Tear Stains on White Dogs

Many people with small white dogs have the problem of rust-colored tear stains. The staining may be caused by protein in the tears binding to iron and turning that color, or it may turn brown from a bacterial infection. But the first thing to realize is that the underlying problem is the tear production, not the staining – the malformed tear ducts that allow tears to flow out excessively.

The first thing to do is have your vet check the tear ducts and give an opinion about whether you should see a veterinary ophthalmologist to determine whether there is anything that can be done about the ducts themselves. If not, you are back dealing with the staining from the tears. There are commercial products to remove eye stains but none that people recommend. In fact, people find that the products may just spread the staining on more of the pooch's face.

Treatments: “Angel face” is a product to remove tear staining. However, it turns out that the product contains Tylosin, which is an antibiotic, and it isn't advisable to use antibiotics over a long period of time. However, there are human medicinal products that contain boric acid, like contact lens solution, and some people find this works well to clean off the stain. There is also a product called Eye Envy, at www.eyeenvy.com or 800-Eye-Envy.