

Important Guidelines For Cleaning Your Pet's Ear

Routinely Clean Your Pet's Ears –

Pets that suffer from chronic ear problems should have their ears routinely cleansed with specialized, wax-dissolving ear cleansers. This preventive treatment can help reduce the likelihood of future ear infections.

Guidelines For Ear Cleaning –

While holding the head still and with the ear flap laid back, squeeze the bottle containing your veterinarian's recommended ear cleaning solution. Completely fill the external canal. **DO NOT** force solution into the canal under pressure. Place a clean, dry cotton ball at the entrance to the ear canal and gently massage the external canal, working the solution from deep in the canal to the outer surface. Replace the cotton ball periodically to absorb the solution and wax debris. Repeat the process as needed until all the wax debris has been removed from the ear. **Be sure to read all label directions as some ear cleansers require you to rinse the ear canal with warm water after treatment.**

**PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW LABEL
DIRECTIONS ON ANY EAR MEDICATION**

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Ear Disorders



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A Common Concern For Many Pet Owners



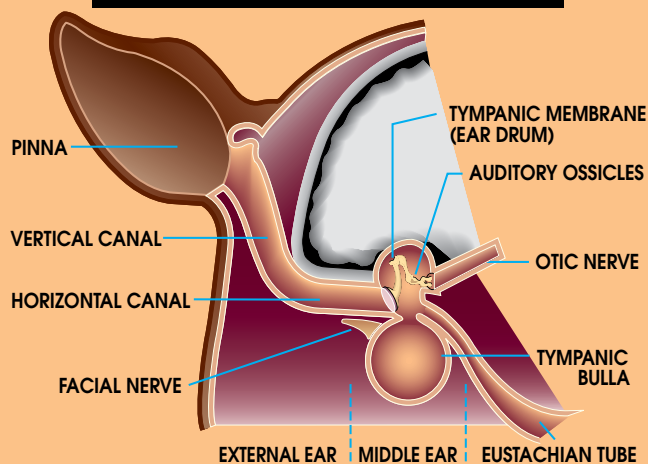
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*"The comprehensive care your pet needs,
the compassion you deserve."*

Your pet's ears are among the most sensitive and defenseless parts of its body, prone to parasites, foreign objects, fungal and bacterial infections, allergies and skin disorders. Pet ear disorders are common afflictions treated by veterinarians.

ILLUSTRATION OF A DOG'S EAR



Why are Ear Problems so Common?

As you can see from the illustration above, the ears of dogs and cats are mostly hidden. They are moist, dark environments with little air circulation, susceptible to bacterial and yeast infections. Some pets, such as Spaniels have large and furry ear flaps which predisposed them to ear problems because their ears are covered. Cats and certain canine breeds, such as German Shepherds, have fewer ear problems because their ears stand up and allow better air circulation. Because your pet's ears are mostly hidden, it is harder to detect ear problems.

How Do I Tell If My Pet Has an Ear Problem?

An ear problem can be irritating or very painful to your pet. You may notice your pet scratching its ears, shaking its head or rubbing its ears against carpet or grass, or you may see red, thick and inflamed skin on the outer ear. An infection of the outer ear produces a foul-smelling, thick, waxy and yellow/black discharge. An untreated infection may advance to the semicircular canals of the inner ear, causing your pet to tilt its head or exhibit loss of balance and coordination.

How Does a Veterinarian Treat Ear Disorders?

Your veterinarian must examine your pet thoroughly to determine the cause of the problem and the most effective treatment. **Laboratory tests may be required.** Prior to applying medication, your veterinarian may need to remove wax and debris by thoroughly flushing, cleaning and drying the outer ear. Since some pets are very sensitive to ear handling, it may be necessary for your veterinarian to sedate or anesthetize the pet. **Never use an old medication to treat a new problem before consulting with your veterinarian.**

Is Surgery Ever Required?

Yes. If your pet has a chronic ear problem which cannot be controlled by conventional therapy, a surgical procedure called *lateral ear resection* will establish better circulation, allowing improved drainage of the outer ear canal. This is a last resort, but may prevent chronic suffering of your pet and save you the expense of repeated conventional treatments.

Preventing Ear Disorders –

As with any health concern, prevention is the first line of defense. Examine your pet's ears regularly, even if there are no symptoms. If your pet's ears are normal, they will be free of foul odors and have a slight pinkish-white color. The skin around and within the ear should be soft and elastic rather than hard, swollen or crusty. If your pet has chronic ear problems, have its ears routinely cleaned with specialized ear cleansers. Consult with and follow the advice of your veterinarian regarding your pet's special needs.