

## Ear Care

Clean, odour-free, pale pink colour and a minimal accumulation of wax are indications of healthy ears. Check your pet's ears regularly.

### Signs of Ear Disease

- Unpleasant odour
- Excessive scratching and pawing of the ear and head
- Sensitivity to touch, often resulting in pain
- Constant tilting/shaking of the head to one side
- Black or yellowish discharge
- Redness or swelling of the ear flap or canal
- Changes in behavior like listlessness, depression or irritability
- Accumulation of dark brown wax
- Loss of balance or hearing and disorientation
- Bleeding or discharge resembling coffee grinds



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### Causes of Ear Disease

Some breeds are more susceptible than others, including dogs with pendulous ears or dogs with hairy inner ear flaps. Dogs with allergies are also at risk.

#### Otitis Externa

Infection of the external ear canal and Otitis Media, infection of the middle ear, are usually caused by bacteria or yeast. Other possibilities include accumulation of wax, matted hair, debris or a foreign object lodged in the ear canal. When seeking treatment, act quickly. If your dog has an ear infection, he will be in considerable discomfort. Antibiotics are used for bacterial infections while antifungals are administered for yeast. Ear infections can also be indicative of other problems such as allergies, hormonal abnormalities or hereditary diseases. Your veterinarian will determine this during your visit and suggest the best course of action.

**Ear Mites** are common parasites that are highly contagious, often contracted from pet to pet. Excessive itching is the most common sign. Ear mites create dark, crumbly debris that look like coffee grinds.

**Hematoma of the Ear Flap** means blood has accumulated in the ear flap (pinna). Vigorous head shaking, scratching or trauma to the ear area result in damage to the blood vessels, often set off by infection, mites, fleas or debris.

**Deafness** usually brought on by age, trauma, loud noise or infection, can also be hereditary or congenital. Unfortunately, once diagnosed with clinical deafness, it is a lifelong condition.

### Prevention

Ear cleaning solution used on an appropriate basis can be helpful in maintaining your dog's ears healthy.

### How to Administer Ear Drops or Ointment to Dogs

- Clean the external ear thoroughly with a moistened cotton ball (water or veterinary-recommended solution).
- Gently pull the ear flap over the head and drop the medication into the lowest opening of the ear canal.

Gently massage the ear area to help work the medication deeper into the ear canal. If there is enough medication in the ear, you will just begin to hear a "squishing" noise as you massage.

