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Dog Ear Care – Keeping Your Dog's Ears Healthy & Pain Free

By Teresa James, Dog-Supplies-Advisor.com

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Importance of Regular Home Dog Ear Care

Routine home dog ear care is very important to the health of your dog. Performed between your regular checkups with the veterinarian, it will help keep your dog's ears healthy and pain free. If you see signs of trouble you may be able to head them off before they require an extra visit to the vet. Excessive wax, foul odor, redness, constant scratching, excessive matting of hair in the external ear, rubbing the ears against other objects, head shaking, and disorientation can all be signs of ear problems.

Inspect Your Dog's Ears Regularly By Using Your Eyes & Your Nose!

By performing a home dog ear care inspection; you will be able to detect problems early. Use both your eyes and your nose. If you need help seeing inside your dog's ears you may want to invest in a pet scope. A tool very similar to the kind your doctor uses to check your ears. Check for redness, excessive wax build up or any other foreign matter.

Sniffing your dog's ears is another way to detect problems early. Normally a dog's ears shouldn't smell foul in any way. If you see a dark waxy discharge this may be a sign of ear mites. On the other hand, if you see a pus-like discharge along with a foul smell this may be a sign of a bacterial infection. Allergies are also known to cause some dogs to have smelly ears. If you're new to this and are unsure have the vet check your dog's ears. Right after the vet gives your dog a clean bill of health make sure you inspect your dog's ears. This way you will learn how your pet's ears should normally look and smell.

Is Your Breed of Dog More Susceptible To Dog Ear Care Problems?

Due to the warm, damp, and dark environment, as well as poor air circulation, your dog's ear canal can be the perfect breeding ground for mites, yeast or bacterial infection. This is why, for certain breeds,

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home dog ear care is even more important. Some pets may require routine applications of dog ear care products to keep their ears free of mites, yeast or bacterial infections.

Some dog's ears stand straight up which allows for more air to flow into the ear canal. Dogs with floppy ears, like spaniels and bloodhounds, are very prone to ear infections because very little air flows into their ear canals. There are also breeds, like the Lhasa, that have a heavy growth of hair inside their ears. This hair must be routinely removed as a prevention against chronic ear problems.

If Excess Ear Hair Is A Dog Ear Care Problem Learn How To Remove It

If you suspect that excess ear hair is a problem, you may need to pluck the hair that grows inside your dog's ears. This is a routine dog ear care task that can be performed at home and is much easier than it sounds. You will want to apply dog ear powder to the inside of both ears. Make sure that the hair is

completely covered, especially at the base. Once the powder has dried start plucking a few hairs at a time with your fingers or a tweezers. Plucking just a few hairs at a time will be less irritating for the dog.

You may want to stop a few times to give your dog's ears a good rub. Make sure you give your dog lots of praise and a few dog treats too. Once all the inside hair has been removed, follow up by cleaning and inspecting the ears. If you are unsure about this dog ear care procedure, have your vet or a professional groomer show you how to do it.

Things You Should Know About Cleaning Your Dog's Ears

Some vets recommend that owners routinely flush their dog's ears with warm water at the slightest hint of odor. Other home dog ear care cleaning remedies include mineral oil, hydrogen peroxide, or a combination of equal parts of vinegar and rubbing alcohol. If your dog has open sores it's best not to use the vinegar and alcohol because it will cause a burning sensation.

If your dog is prone to ear infections you may want to use a pet ear care product that is specifically formulated to clean and dry up excess moisture in the ear canal. A dog ear wash containing Tea Tree Oil, which is also formulated to dry the ear canal is an excellent choice. Tea Tree Oil's natural antiseptic, antibacterial and fungicidal properties can help keep your dog's ears problem free.

It's also a good idea to use a pet ear-drying agent after bathing or swimming especially if your dog's ears retain moisture and don't dry promptly. There are many good pet ear care products available for routine ear cleaning that will dissolve wax, remove foreign debris and dry the ear canal. There are also home dog care treatments available that will kill pesky ear mites and ear ticks.

A dog's ear canal is L-shaped. It descends vertically and it makes a 90-degree horizontal turn before it reaches the eardrum. Even though your dog's eardrum is better protected than a human's, you should still proceed with caution when cleaning the ear canal. Many vets urge caution when inserting anything into the ear canal, especially cotton-tipped swabs. They can actually push dirt and foreign matter deeper into the ear if not handled properly. You can even lose the cotton tip in the ear canal.

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Start cleaning the external part of the ear by swabbing inside the earflaps and all around the gnarled area at the entrance of the ear canal. If you choose to use a cotton-tipped swab you will need a long type since a dog's ear canal is much deeper than ours. If your dog will tolerate it, gently and carefully swab the inside of the ear canal. A much safer method is to fill the ear canal with a pet ear cleaning solution and gently massage the outer ear. After a few minutes allow your dog to shake his head to help clear the ear canal. If you're using a commercial pet ear care product be sure to follow the instructions carefully.

Make Ear Inspections An Important Part Of Your Home Dog Ear Care Routine

Checking your dog's ears only takes a few minutes so make it a part of your dog grooming routine. And when your dog's ears need a cleaning don't put it off. Remember regular cleanings can prevent many common ear problems. If you think a problem may be developing that is beyond the scope of your home dog ear care routine, take your dog to the vet for a check up immediately. An infection, if left untreated, can be very painful for your dog and could even damage your dog's hearing.

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Causes, Signs And Treatments For Dog Ear Infections

By Shannon Lueck

The outer ear, middle ear and the inner ear are the three parts that make up an ear. The one most likely to get an infection is the outer ear. It is reported that about 90% of infections happen in the outer ear.

Infections of the outer ear canal are common among dogs. Dog ear infections, or Otitis Externa, occur frequently in dogs because of the way their ears are designed. The horizontal and vertical components of a dog's ear make it difficult for particles such as water or debris to drain out.

Signs that Your Dog Has an Ear Infection:

- * Your dog is constantly and excessively shaking its head.
- * There is yellow to brown discharge in your dog's ears.
- * Your dog's ears have a yeast-like smell.
- * There is redness and swelling on your dog's infected ear.

Possible Causes of Dog Ear Infection:

Dog ear infections are caused by a variety of things. However, allergies are the typical cause of dog ear infections. If your dog has allergies or is highly susceptible to allergies, your dog is likely to have

ear infections.

Water getting into the ears is another common cause of ear infections among dogs. So if your dog likes to swim, it is prone to ear infections. This is because of the way your dog's ears are designed. When water gets inside your dog's ears, the water can't properly drain out. Thus, your dog's ears become the perfect breeding ground for bacteria and yeast. This doesn't mean, however, that you shouldn't allow your dog to swim or play in the water anymore. It just means that you should thoroughly dry your dog's ears after to prevent ear infections.

Cleaning Your Dog's Infected Ear:

Regardless of how much you take care of your dog's well being, your dog will most likely eventually have ear infections. When this happens, you need to know the correct way of cleaning your dog's ear before putting medication.

1. Put a few drops of ear cleanser into your dog's infected ear.
2. Next, gently rub or massage the ear to loosen any debris that is stuck in there.
3. Using a soft cloth, gauze or cotton ball, gently scrape and wipe the dirt out of the infected ear.

Medicating Your Dog's Infected Ear:

After thoroughly cleaning your dog's infected ear, apply medication according to the veterinarian's instructions or the instructions found on the label.

Your dog's veterinarian will prescribe the appropriate treatment based on what has caused your dog's ear to become infected. For instance, if your dog's ear infection was caused by a yeast infection, the

veterinarian will prescribe an anti-fungal medication. If the infection was caused by a bacteria, your dog will be prescribed antibiotics.

Medications for dog ear infections are typically applied directly into the ears. However, if your dog has a severe ear infection, the veterinarian may prescribe oral treatment. The veterinarian may also clip the hair around your dog's infected ear to allow more air to circulate in it. Surgery, for reconstructing the ear canal so that it drains better and easier, is the last recourse when topical and oral treatments have failed.

While all dogs are prone to ear infections, those belonging to breeds with large ears that flap over the outer ear canal as well as those breeds of dogs with very small ear canals are most susceptible. As a dog owner, it's your responsibility to take care of your dog's well being. Take proper care of your dog's ears and learn how to detect the early signs of ear infections.

I love dogs and have owned them most of my life. I've done a lot of research and put together a free website and newsletter for fellow dog owners. Please visit:



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