



Cleaning Your Pet's Ears

Your pet's ears should be cleaned only when necessary. Excessive cleaning may predispose your pet to otitis externa (ear infections).

When they are inflamed, ears should be cleaned every two to seven days as needed in order to keep the ears clean. Inflammation is most commonly seen during allergy season in some dogs, as well as in the middle of winter.

We recommend you clean your dog's ears every three days *when they are infected*. Using a good ear cleaner will help to get rid of excess debris so that medication can reach the skin of the ear canal. Ear cleaners also acidify the pH of the ear canal and make it more difficult for yeast and bacteria to grow.

After the infection has cleared, we suggest you clean your pet's ears every one to two weeks to prevent future infections. This is especially important during those times of the year that your pet seems to be more prone to ear infections.

Swimming or bathing can cause ear infections if water is allowed to remain in the ears. Make sure you clean your pet's ears out after a bath or a swim to remove all water and reduce the incidence of bacterial growth.

The Technique:

Our veterinarian can provide you with a high quality ear cleaning solution. Do not attempt to use human ear cleaning solutions because they are not properly formulated to use in the ears of your dog or cat. Keep the solution at room temperature or warm it to room temperature before you use it.

To clean your pet's ear's, you will first need to obtain the following supplies:

- Ear cleaning solution
 - Cotton balls
 - Gauze sponges or paper towels
 - Cotton-tipped applicators
1. Fill the entire ear canal with the solution. The solution should come up to the top of the canal.
 2. Place a cotton ball in the opening of the external ear canal.

3. Gently massage the ear canal using an upward motion to help pull the solution up into the cotton ball.
4. Remove the cotton ball and repeat the process until the solution absorbed by the cotton ball is clean.
5. Massage a cotton ball in the opening of the canal until the majority of the solution has been removed from the ear. You can use the gauze sponges or a paper towel wrapped around your finger to clean out the opening of the ear canal, where debris occasionally will settle.
6. Clean visible areas with the cotton-tipped applicator, paying special attention to the little ridges of the ear canal on the outside aspect. **DO NOT** clean deep in the canal with the applicators; this will push exudate deeper into the canal!
7. Repeat the process for the other ear if both ears are infected.

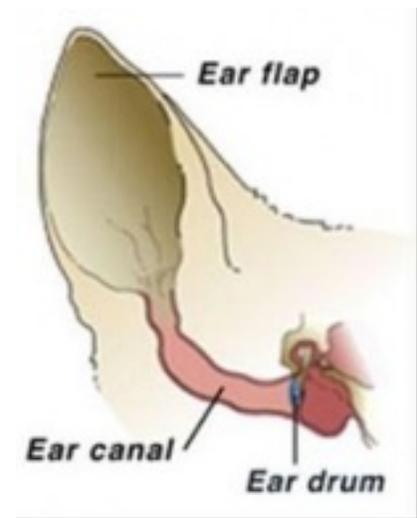


Image retrieved from Guernsey Veterinary Clinic
<http://www.guernseyvet.com/2011/05/22/otitis-externa/>

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact us at
(651) 283-7216 or **housepawsmn@gmail.com**.