

# Otitis Externa



## What is Otitis Externa?

Otitis externa is an infection of the external ear canal that causes inflammation and pain. Certain breeds of dogs are more susceptible. Often times, ear infections are indicative of underlying problems such as allergies, and hormonal abnormalities, as well as accumulation of wax, matted hair, and debris. These conditions can lead to an overgrowth of yeast, and/or bacteria in the ear canal.

## What are symptoms of Otitis Externa?

- 🐾 Redness/swelling of pinna/canal
- 🐾 Unpleasant odour
- 🐾 Excessive scratching and pawing
- 🐾 Sensitivity to touch
- 🐾 Head tilt or head shaking
- 🐾 Black/brown/yellow discharge
- 🐾 Changes in behaviour
- 🐾 Loss of balance or hearing
- 🐾 Bleeding

## Treatments of Otitis Externa

1. An ear cleanser is often prescribed to help clear the ear canal/pinna of unwanted debris so that the medicated drops can do their job
2. Topical ointment specific for the type of infection - usually applied one to two times daily in a clean ear
3. Systemic anti-inflammatories to help alleviate inflammation and pain associated with severe infections.

## How to Medicate the Ears:

- 🐾 The external canal should be thoroughly cleaned and dried before treatment
- 🐾 Gently pull the ear flap over the head and administer a modest amount of the topical medication
- 🐾 After application, massage the base of the ear to allow the medication to penetrate the lower part of the canal

**All patients that have otitis externa should be seen for a recheck after 14 days of treatment. This is to ensure that the infection has cleared properly!**

