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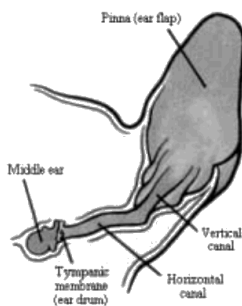
Otitis externa is the most common type of ear infection in pets and often are secondary to atopy (inhalant allergies), food allergies, or moisture retention. Any breed can develop otitis externa, but certain breeds, like Cocker Spaniels and Labradors, tend to develop them more readily.

Signs of ear infections include, shaking the head, pawing at ears, one drop, and sensitivity to touch on the affected ear. There may also be a noticeably foul or musty odor.

It is crucial to clean ears that are prone to infection once a week and after any water exposure, like swimming and bathing.

Ear infections are hardly ever are a one-time occurrence. It is recommended that you remain attentive to your pet's ears to ensure fast treatment if the infection recurs. If an infection persists, call us immediately so we can reevaluate the ears and ensure we are still using the proper medication. Sometimes, it is necessary to culture the ear, that is, obtain a sample and grow the bacteria causing the infection. This testing allows us to determine more specifically which medication(s) will best treat the infection.

Procedure:



1. **How to clean the ears** – as you can see on the figure to the left, the ear canal makes an “L.” You cannot easily hit the ear drum, like in people, but it is possible to cause buildup by pushing wax and debris into the ear canal. Always pull up and out of the ear when using wipes and Q-tips. Squirt the cleansing solution into the ear and rub the base of the between your index finger and thumb. Use your Q-tips/gauze to wipe the dirt/wax away.

2. **To medicate the ear**– place the applicator tip in the opening of the ear canal and squirt the directed amount into ear. Again, rub the ear canal to work the medication down into it. It may be necessary to put apply the medication on the ear flap if the infection has extended onto it. An easy and less messy way to do this, is to make a line of medication from the base of the ear flap up to the top, and then fold the flap in half lengthwise and rub it back and forth.