

# Understanding Ear Infections in Pets

**How Ear Infections Can Happen:** Ear infections in pets can develop due to a range of factors, often involving the accumulation of moisture, debris, or underlying health conditions. Common causes include:

1. **Allergies:** Pets with environmental or food allergies are prone to ear infections due to inflammation that disrupts the normal ear environment.
2. **Moisture:** Water trapped in the ear after bathing or swimming creates an ideal environment for bacteria and yeast to thrive.
3. **Ear Anatomy:** Breeds with floppy ears or narrow ear canals are more susceptible because these structures can trap moisture and debris.
4. **Foreign Bodies:** Grass seeds, dirt, or other foreign materials can become lodged in the ear canal, causing irritation and infection.
5. **Excessive Ear Wax:** Overproduction of ear wax can trap bacteria and yeast, leading to infections.
6. **Excessive Ear Hair:** Can trap bacteria and yeast, leading to infections. You can get your dog's hair plucked from ears but there are pros and cons in doing this. Talk to us if you want more information on ear plucking.
7. **Hormonal Imbalances:** Conditions like hypothyroidism can affect the skin's health, including the ears.
8. **Parasites:** Ear mites are common in cats and can also affect dogs, leading to severe irritation and secondary infections.
9. **Underlying Medical Conditions:** Chronic skin conditions, immune disorders, or tumors in the ear canal can predispose pets to recurrent infections.

## Signs of Ear Infections to Watch For:

- Head shaking or tilting.
- Scratching at the ears
- Redness or swelling inside the ear.
- Foul odor from the ear
- Discharge (yellow, brown, or bloody)
- Sensitivity or pain when touching the ears.
- Hearing loss or balance issues

**What to Do If You Suspect an Ear Infection:** Contact Franktown Animal Clinic to schedule an appointment. Early intervention helps prevent complications and relieves discomfort quickly.

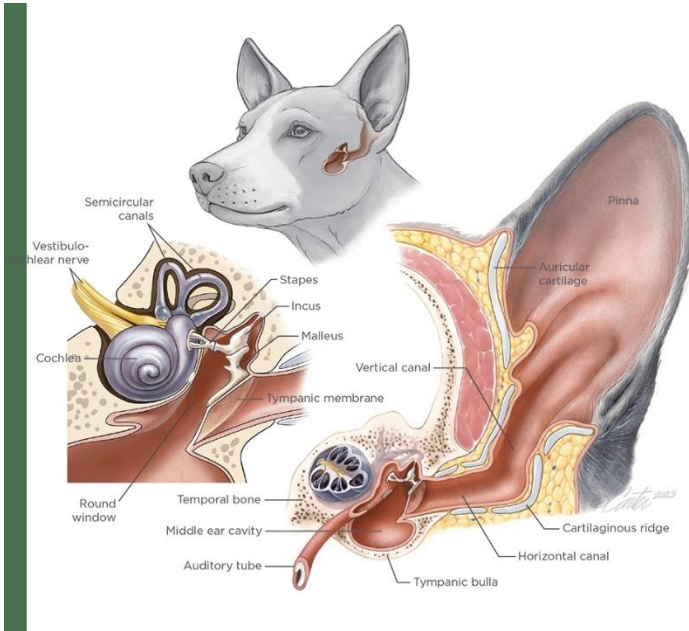
## Our Diagnostic and Treatment Approach:

1. **Ear Cytology:** We take samples from both ears to examine under a microscope, identifying bacteria, yeast, or inflammatory cells that cause infections.
2. **Ear Cleaning:** A thorough cleaning removes debris and discharge, allowing medications to work effectively.
3. **Medication Application:** Based on cytology results, the doctor prescribes and applies the appropriate ear medications.
4. **Recheck Appointments:** Follow-up visits ensure the infection has resolved and help prevent recurrence.

Turn over for more information

## How to Clean Your Dog's Ears at Home:

1. **Gather Supplies:** Ear cleaning solution (recommended by your vet), cotton balls or gauze, and treats.
2. **Position Your Dog:** Keep your dog calm and steady. Use a helper if needed.
3. **Apply Cleaning Solution:** Fill the ear canal with the solution without inserting the tip too deeply.
4. **Massage the Base:** Gently massage the base of the ear for 20-30 seconds to loosen debris.
5. **Wipe Away Debris:** Let your dog shake its head, then use cotton balls to wipe the outer ear canal. Do not use cotton swabs as they can push debris further in.
6. **Reward Your Dog:** Praise and give treats to create a positive association.




## When to Seek Veterinary Care:

- Persistent symptoms despite home cleaning
- Severe pain, swelling, or bleeding.
- Black or dark brown discharge
- Signs of hearing loss or disorientation

 Franktown Animal Clinic

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