

## Ear Mites in Pets

Ear mites are a common and irritating problem for pets, particularly cats and dogs. These tiny parasites can cause significant discomfort and lead to secondary infections if left untreated. Understanding their life cycle, symptoms, and treatment options can help ensure your pet's health and comfort.

**What Are Ear Mites?** Ear mites (*Otodectes cynotis*) are tiny, highly contagious parasites that live in the ear canals of cats and dogs. They feed on skin debris and ear wax, causing irritation and inflammation. Ear mites are more common in cats but can also affect dogs and other animals.

**Life Cycle of Ear Mites** Ear mites have a life cycle of about three weeks and can live up to two months:

- **Eggs:** Female mites lay eggs in the ear canal.
- **Larvae:** The eggs hatch into larvae in about 4 days.
- **Nymphs:** The larvae develop into two nymph stages before reaching adulthood.
- **Adults:** Adult mites continue to reproduce, perpetuating the infestation.

Ear mites spread through direct contact with infected animals, making multi-pet households particularly susceptible.

**Symptoms of Ear Mites** Pets with ear mites may exhibit the following signs:

- Intense scratching at the ears
- Frequent head shaking
- Dark Brown, coffee-ground-like debris in the ears
- Redness and inflammation of the ear canal
- Unpleasant odor from the ears
- Crusting or scabbing around the ears (in severe cases)

**How We Diagnose Ear Mites** At Franktown Animal Clinic, we perform an **ear swab with microscopic evaluation** to accurately diagnose ear mites. A sample of ear debris is collected and examined under a microscope to identify mites or their eggs.

## Treatment and Management


- **Topical Medications:** Prescription ear drops that kill mites and reduce inflammation.
- **Systemic Treatments:** Some flea and tick preventatives also help eliminate and prevent ear mites.
- **Cleaning the Ears:** Proper ear cleaning helps remove debris and improves treatment effectiveness.
- **Treating All Pets in the Household:** Since ear mites are highly contagious, all pets in the home should be treated to prevent reinfestation.
- **Thoroughly Cleaning the Environment:** Vacuum the house thoroughly, treat carpets and upholstery with flea powder, and wash all pet bedding and grooming tools to prevent reinfestation.
- **Follow-Up Examination:** A recheck appointment is recommended to ensure the mites are fully eradicated.


If your pet is showing signs of ear mites, contact Franktown Animal Clinic at **303-688-4690** to schedule an evaluation and begin treatment.

Turn over for more information

**Franktown Animal Clinic**

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