



Canadian Professional Pet Stylists

Ears and Grooming

Courtesy of the
Professional Pet Groomers Assoc. of Manitoba



OTITIS EXTERNA

Otitis Externa is defined as inflammation of the external ear canal.

Occasionally after grooming some pets seem to 'develop' ear infections. Some pets will excessively rub or scratch at their ears and/or shake their heads. The pets that commonly exhibit these symptoms are the ones that came into the grooming shop with early signs of Otitis Externa or pets that are predisposed to overgrowth of bacteria or yeast in their ear canals.

During the grooming procedure, your pet's ears were thoroughly cleaned out and, for breeds that require it, any hairs plucked from the ear canal. Some irritation from plucking the ear hair out or cleaning the ears may occur; perpetuating the onset of a bacterial overgrowth and/or leading to the 'itch and scratch' cycle.

It is very important that you not allow your pet to excessively scratch or rub at his/her ears, as this will cause damage to the sensitive skin of the outer ear canal. Also beware of allowing the dogs to dig their nails into the ear canal to scratch and damage the sensitive ear canal.

PRIMARY CAUSES OF OTITIS EXTERNA

- Parasites – such as ear mites, mange or ticks
- Allergies – which is the most common cause of otitis externa in dogs. Allergies include: contact allergies, flea allergy dermatitis and atopy, the allergic disease caused by pollens and molds, or food allergy (most common of the allergies!)
- Foreign Bodies – such as plant material or seeds (stickers from grasses or weeds like fox tails)
- Other Dermatologic disease – any dermatologic disease that affects the ear flaps can lead to inflammation in the external ear canal. Auto-immune diseases can cause severe scaling, crusting, and ulceration of the pinna (ear flaps) and external ear canal. Glandular disorders and viral diseases.
- High levels of yeast or bacteria.



Bathing does not cause ear infections in dogs.