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## **Helpful Hints on the Treatment of Otitis Externa**

### **1. What is Otitis Externa?**

Otitis Externa is the medical term for the inflammation of the external ear canal.

### **2. What are some of the factors leading to Otitis externa?**

There are several factors that can lead to Otitis Externa. These include ear mite infections, foreign bodies, allergies, and hormonal and skin disease.

### **3. What infectious agents contribute to Otitis Externa?**

Bacteria and yeasts are the two most common infectious agents that contribute to Otitis Externa. Many of these organisms are normal inhabitants of your pet's ear canal. However, their numbers may multiply, changing the environment of the ear canal and severely worsening your pet's problem.

### **4. What are the treatment goals and strategies involved in solving your pet's ear problem?**

The ultimate goal of the treatment of Otitis Externa is to change the environment of the ear canal back to its normal healthy state. Your veterinarian will select a treatment regimen designed around the specific needs of your pet.

One of your veterinarian's first priorities will be to clean your pet's ears. Thorough cleaning will allow your veterinarian to better understand the seriousness of your pet's problem and also allow medications to work more effectively.

Choice of medication will be made depending on your veterinarian's assessment of your pet's problem. If your pet's problem is related to a bacterial infection, antibiotic preparations will be administered. If

your pet's condition is related to a mixed bacteria and yeast infection, a product that has the ability to deal with both of these types of infectious agents will be prescribed. Many times your veterinarian will select a product that also includes an anti-inflammatory agent. Once the inflammation has subsided, you will notice that your pet will be a lot more comfortable, and, therefore, less prone to causing further damage to the ear by scratching, rubbing or shaking.

## **Proper Medication of your Dog's Ear**

1. Before applying topical medication, your pet's ear may need to be cleaned. Waxy buildup and debris can prevent medications from working well. Your veterinarian will instruct you on proper cleaning techniques.
2. Apply the prescribed amount of medication in the upper ear canal.
3. Gently massage the base of the ear to distribute the medication down into the lower ear canal.
4. Wipe off excess medication.