

Ear Care

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



From time to time your pet may shake his head or scratch at his ears as if something is in them. At these times it is best to take your pet to the veterinarian and have him perform a thorough ear examination.

A dog's L-shaped ear canal makes ears a challenge to examine. A veterinary [otoscope](#) (a lighting device used to look into the ear canal) is the perfect tool for your veterinarian to use to detect ear problems early. Early detection and treatment means less expense for you.

The skin of the canal should be pale pink. Normal wax is light tan in color. When your veterinarian looks into your pet's ear, she will look for:

1. **Redness**, which would indicate inflammation, possibly from allergies, scratching, or infection
2. **Unusual colored discharge**
 - Yellowish discharge could indicate bacterial infection
 - Dark brown, smelly discharge may indicate a yeast infection
 - Dark brown, crumbly discharge may indicate the presence of ear mites
3. **Foreign bodies**, such as dirt, foxtail (or similar) seeds, and other matter.
4. **Excess wax** in the canal, which may indicate a need for a change in cleaning protocol
5. **Change in texture** of the ear canal, which may indicate allergies or chronic ear infection



6. Growths or developmental abnormalities

Your veterinarian will also check the tympanic membrane (eardrum) to see if there are any abnormalities.

If your veterinarian sees any of the above problems, she may prescribe medications or, if your pet has ear mites (*Otodectes spp*), she may recommend the use of a miticide such as [Sentry Earmite Free Ear Miticide for Dogs](#).



To prevent ear problems, follow a regular ear-cleaning schedule using the correct cleaning products such as [Ear Clens Solution](#) or [Ear Clens Pads](#).

Recommended Ear Care Products



Drs. Foster & Smith Ear Clens® Kit



Drs. Foster & Smith Ear Clens Pads



Veterinary Quality Otoscope