

# A DOG'S EARS

By Darja Žnidaršič



Did you know that its usually best to get a veterinary clean your dog's ears?

If you notice the following...

- nervousness or confusion
- shaking its head
- scratching its ears too much
- squeeling (whining, crying)
- a "suffered" face expression (tightened lips, deep stare, narrowed or very widened pupils or eye expression, whole face tightness or sometimes even body, ribs showing even though he didn't lose weight, head skin constricted (sometimes it is not possible to move/slide it along the skull))

... your dog's ears are **highly likely\*** inflamed or infected.

In that case i advise you to not take care of it alone but to seek a veterinary advice. If the dogs ears are inflamed or infected it is not only dangerous for him but also VERY painful. Call your vet.

Your veterinary will usually:

- gently examine the ears
- consult with you on what symptoms did the dog show or any changes in habit

If it is an infection:

- he will examine what kind of an infection it is (whether it is bacterial, fungal, parasitic or the culprit is a foreign object (most likely grass seeds). Fungal infections are usually visible right away however for the others a swab has to be taken.
- What kind of treatment is needed. He usually gently wipes/rinses the ears immediately with the appropriate cleanser, thoroughly dries them and applies drops. If the dog is in pain he will also give him analgetics.
- Advise you with what you can do for your dog at home ( adapt his food, give him antibiotics, strengthen his immune system,... )

I ADVISE YOU TO: Be attentive for showing signs of an ear infection so your dog gets treated before it gets worse and to be able to make an appointment with the vet to avoid unannounced visits. In the case of a sudden infection or a sudden finding it or seeing your dog is in pain do not postpone a visit to the veterinary contact him immediately.

NEVER FORGET: always be respectful towards your veterinary's time and schedule. Know to call or visit outside working hours only when there is no other way.

### **HOW CAN YOU PREVENT PROBLEMS WITH YOUR DOG'S EARS?**

- Aside from gentle brushing and petting your dog is also beneficial to regularly gently massage your dog's ears, knowing there are many acupressure points there that influence all of the organs are working properly.
  - Every now and then gently uplift the dog's ear and look in it, check it is dry and there is no unpleasant odour there. Also get your dog accustomed to you gently touching his ear, this will help him to trust when it is needed a stranger (vet) is touching it.
  - If possible do some Tellington Touch there, it strengthens the immune system and your bond with the dog.
  - If the vet instructs you to clean the ears yourself, be careful that you are gentle , not squirting liquids there under a lot of pressure ( i once did it because i was advised to but later saw how wrong it was ), not cleaning the ears with cold liquids ( imagine you having very cold water in your ear) and being sure that everything that goes in the ear is in room temperature. Last but not least, **TALK TO YOUR DOG**, tell him what you will be doing, lovingly, simply and shortly explaining what is expected of him. I promise you will see how hard he will try to help and be a good boy for you.
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**EXTRA:** In the case of getting instructions of you having to clean his ears deeply and give medications yourself you can contact me for advice on [darjaranc@gmail.com](mailto:darjaranc@gmail.com)

My advice is that some things should be left to professionals.

Don't forget, you are your 4 legged friends Ambassador and it is your responsibility that he is safe and healthy. But this does not include complicating things, google wisdoms and distrust towards your veterinary. You need to find a vet that is right for you and your dog. One that you trust and one which who **your dog feels good**. Some times we get insecure if we don't feel appreciated by our vet, but the only thing that counts on the end of the line is his knowledge, what he is prepared to do for our dogs benefit, is accessible at night and during the weekends and holidays. For me it is important also if he is prepared to ask a fellow vet for consult, when he is in a situation in which he is not sure of something. Ofcourse it helps that the bill is also reasonable.

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**\*highly likely:** Constant shaking with head is also a very common sign of ( common underlying reasons for them added also ) :

1. Muscle and fascitic spasms. This is how a dog will try to relax his spastic spots.

- Inappropriate equipment or the way we lead them, tiredness ( no place to relax without anyone intruding ) , running along a bike or motorbike, rough handling of a dog even if not intentional, old age, pain, other sicknesses.

2. Headache

- Dehydration ( water not clean, not enough water, too dry room, only dry food ), problems with neck, injury, emotional problems, etc.

3. Problem with the neck ( Axis – Atlas ) or with skull joints.

- Inappropriate equipment and leading of the dog, problems with static, illness, etc.

4. Inappropriate equipment

- Collar, choking collar, inappropriate harness, too short leash, too small bed, etc.

5. Other

- Dog overwhelmed because of children or not having a space where he is left completely alone, inappropriate leading of the dog, psychological or emotional problems, illness.



Written by:

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