



Otitis

What is Otitis?

Otitis is normally divided into two categories either Otitis Externa or Otitis Media. Otitis Externa is the inflammation of the outer ear and ear canal. Otitis Media is the inflammation of the structures within the middle ear. If left untreated Otitis Externa can develop into Otitis Media.

Causes

Parasites such as ear mites are often a causing factor of Otitis in young puppies and kittens. Other causes include allergies, skin disease, foreign bodies (such as grass seeds), polyps or tumours. Some hormone disorders such as hypothyroidism can also increase the risk of developing Otitis.

Affected Animals

All dogs and cats can develop Otitis although some breeds are predisposed due to their conformation such as Shar Peis with narrow ear canals or Bassets with long, floppy ear flaps which reduce air flow.

Clinical Signs

Clinical signs can vary depending on the severity of the condition and the cause of the Otitis but can include head shaking, scratching/rubbing of one or both ears, ear discharge, foul smell from ears, reddening and swelling of ear flaps or pain when the area is touched.

Diagnosis and Treatment Options

Diagnosis is usually made during a physical examination by your veterinary surgeon or nurse. A more thorough examination under sedation or anaesthetic may be required in some cases due to levels of pain or patient temperament. Treatment options will depend on the type of Otitis and cause but will commonly include ear cleaning, application of treatment directly into the ear canal and possibly oral medications. It is important to follow the treatment protocol recommended by your veterinary professionals and ensure all follow up appointments are attended.