

# WHY SHOULD I CLEAN MY PET'S EARS?

Routine cleanings not only improve your pet's comfort level, but they can also help prevent the accumulation of foul-smelling debris and reduce the occurrence of painful ear infections.



## WHEN DO I NEED TO DO IT?

Depending on your pet's individual needs, cleanings are appropriate as often as two or three times a week, or as little as once every few weeks. A build-up of moisture in the ear can provide an ideal environment for microbial growth, so adding an ear cleaning into your pet's bath or swimming regimen is a great way to avoid infection.

## WHAT MATERIALS DO I NEED TO GET STARTED?

**Ear cleanser.** Helps break up debris & contains a drying compound to resolve moisture.

**1-2 paper towels**

**Some medium-sized cotton balls**

**Optional:** A second set of hands, especially for the first few times as your pet gets used to the routine.

## A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO EAR CLEANING

- 🐾 **Start by filling the ear canal with cleanser.** For the first few times, try applying a small amount at a time as they may be sensitive to the new sensation.
- 🐾 **Fold their ear flap down** and gently massage the ear externally to break up any waxy debris.
- 🐾 **Use your cotton balls** to mop up excess solution and wipe away wax from the walls of the canal. Continue until cotton balls stop coming out with debris and there is no solution remaining.
- 🐾 **Twist a paper towel** into a "tornado" shape and insert the tip into the ear as far as you can. Then repeat the external massaging motion from before. This last step is great for getting that last bit of debris from the deeper portion of the ear that you can't reach with the cotton ball.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

Your dog's ear canal is shaped like an "L," with the eardrum located around a bend. Debris can collect along the length of the canal and can get lodged in various nooks and crannies that can be difficult to reach. The goal of the ear cleaning is to remove as much debris as possible without causing excessive discomfort to your pet, so while you strive to be thorough, remember to be gentle and avoid penetrating too deeply. Start small and increase your efforts gradually, and once your dog gets used to the routine, they may even begin to enjoy it!

*If your pet is scratching at or shaking their head or there is significant redness and inflammation to the ear, then an ear infection may already be present, and you should contact us for further treatment.*

