

**Ear Cleaning**

Updated 7/6/19

We recommend routine ear cleaning once weekly with a veterinary approved ear-cleaning solution.

Technique

* Apply ear cleaning solution to a cotton ball or pad until it is *slightly moist* (not soaked and dripping) with solution
* A dog’s ear canal is “L” shaped, which means that you will not touch your dog’s eardrum with your finger. Insert the moistened cotton ball into the ear canal and rotate it as you clean.
* Dogs will generally shake their head after you remove your finger. This will help the accumulated debris at the bottom of the canal rise to the top.
* Use a clean dry cotton ball and wipe any excess cleaning solution residue and debris from the ear canal and pinna.
* Repeat for second ear using a fresh cotton ball or cotton pad.

When is it time to seek veterinary attention?

* Your guide dog constantly shakes his/her head or scratches at the ears.
* Odor is noticeable – A change to a foul odor is generally an indication of an ear infection. A strong sour smell usually signifies a bacterial infection: an excessively sweet smell usually signifies a yeast infection.
* Ear feels waxy, or you see black/brown discharge or an inflamed / red ear.

Never self-diagnose: The ear is a very sensitive organ. What may appear to be similar symptoms to previous ear issue may *not* require similar treatments this time.