

Otitis

Owner information sheet





Otitis is an inflammation of the ear canal, it occurs when the layer of skin lining the ear canal becomes inflamed and possibly infected. It can be caused by many factors, some of the most common include allergies, foreign objects/liquids, and parasites.

The most common clinical signs associated with ear disease include:

- Head shaking
- Scratching affected ear(s)
- Uncomfortable to touch affected ear(s)
- Pinna inflammation/redness
- Abnormal/offensive odour to ear
- Increased discharge from ear canal
- Scaly skin on pinna and down ear canal

In many cases the species and breed of animal will predispose them to ear disease. For example, animals with very hairy ears, narrow ear canals, keen swimmers, those with previous ear problems, or those with large floppy ears are more likely to develop otitis. Treatment usually consists of medicated drops applied to the ear canal for a period of days to weeks as well as cleaning the ear canal. If there is an underlying issue such as an allergy, this will need to be managed with separate medication to prevent further ear issues.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY RESCUE ANIMAL AND ME?

Your pet has had otitis before or during their time at the shelter, they are currently stable with no further treatment required at this stage. Your pet could however be predisposed to recurrent infections. If you identify any of the clinical signs above, prompt veterinary treatment from your own vet will be required. Your pet can lead a normal life but might require regular ear cleaning to reduce the frequency of infection/inflammation. Please note that there are also likely to be insurance exclusions on any future ear disease and you are advised to seek verification from your insurance provider.