

Pet **Tips**



*Presented
by
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Does Your Pet Have "Cocker Crud"?

As a veterinarian, I often see certain breeds of dogs with the same problems over and over again. In fact, it happens so often that most of them have nicknames. For example, the ears of Cocker Spaniels. Because of their thick, dense fur and their downward facing position, their ears are just breeding grounds for bacteria and fungus. We affectionately call this Cocker Crud.

No matter what we may call it, it's uncomfortable for your pet. They may scratch at their ears or rub them on wall and furnishings. Their ears may become red and painful to the touch. Your dog may shake its head frequently, potentially creating fluid filled sacks called hematomas that require sedation and lancing.

Obviously, your dog's ear health is nothing to sniff at. Although if you do take a sniff and notice an unusual aroma, that can be a good sign it's time to visit your vet. Dogs and cats can contract ear mites, which show as reddish or black wax in the ears. Ear mites can be transmitted to other pets, but they are easily treatable. Bacteria and yeast can wreak havoc on your pet's tender ears. Not all antibiotics treat all infections, so your vet may recommend sending a sample off to a lab to determine exactly what is growing in your dog's ears and what will treat it.

Your vet will also most likely perform a thorough ear cleaning and may dispense a topical ointment to soothe reddened ears.

P.S. Bring in this column and receive \$5 off an ear cleaning. Must have an exam performed. New patients only. Offer expires 2/28/08.

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