



Dr. Mulder is the owner and medical director of the Pet Hospital, located at 403 Fairview Drive in Brantford. While treating the 'whole' patient, his experience in emergency medicine, nutrition and 20 years as a general practitioner, allows him to lead the team as they serve the client, helping to meet all their pets' needs. This advice column is provided to help loving pet owners to make decisions in the care of their pet. If you have a question for Dr. Mulder, please send an email to [drmulder@fairviewpet.ca](mailto:drmulder@fairviewpet.ca) or call the Pet Hospital at 519-753-7257.

*Health Care*  
*Isn't Just For Humans!*

## DR. MULDER TALKS PET CARE EARS

**Q** Dear Dr. Mulder: My dog has been shaking his head for a week now. Last month I had him treated on an emergency basis for an ear infection and I don't understand why he has one again. Is there anything I can do at home to avoid another vet visit?

**Dr. Mulder:** Shaking of the head can be caused by anything from a burst blood vessel between the layers of the ear to a serious inner ear infection. Most ear problems that I find in adult dogs have nutritional, allergic or hormonal root causes. The best approach is to get a definitive diagnosis. Although the internet can help you guess at a diagnosis, in my experience, most owners miss the subtle symptoms that reveal the true diagnosis. A thorough veterinary assessment is essential to getting the definitive diagnosis. This may be done with lab tests but often can be observed or deduced depending on how a patient responds to treatment. Once a diagnosis is made, the most appropriate treatment will be prescribed. The correct medication is always less expensive than several wrong ones.

Over-The-Counter human medications or home remedies may appear to help but rarely address the root cause. Since inflammation and pain hide the underlying problems, I begin with a veterinary formulated combination therapy that will reduce inflammation, treat infection, and cleanse the ear canal until the symptoms are resolved. Then, at a follow up examination, I can determine if the initial treatment fully resolved the problem. If not, the next steps can be taken to identify and treat the underlying causes. This follow up is critical! We must know if the problem is resolved all the way to the eardrum. Only then can we assess the eardrum and inner ear. If the deep areas are still affected, 3 or 4 weeks later your pet may have symptoms again.

You were asking why it has come back so soon. I wonder if it was completely resolved in the first place. The ear canal is very long and has a 90-degree bend in it. The problem may start deep within but you may not notice it until it has advanced all the way to the surface. Then when the visible problems are gone, you may assume all is well. Since most dogs never get an ear infection in their lifetime, a recurrent problem means there is an underlying root cause that MUST be addressed or the problem will come back again and again. If this happens, scar tissue and bone growth can harden the normally soft ear cartilage that may be impossible to repair! Don't settle for improved symptoms, aim for complete restoration of health.

**Fairview Drive Pet Hospital**

403 Fairview Drive, Brantford, ON N3R 6T2

519-753-7257

[www.fairviewpet.ca](http://www.fairviewpet.ca) email: [info@fairviewpet.ca](mailto:info@fairviewpet.ca)

ADVERTISEMENT



FAIRVIEW DRIVE  
PET HOSPITAL