



# PET HEALTH



## Ear Mites

### What Are Ear Mites?

Ear mites are tiny parasites that feed on the earwax and oils in your pet's ear. They typically have a three week life cycle and although they are not inherently harmful to your pets, they can be the underlying cause of more serious conditions as well as cause infections to the internal and external ear canal.

Ear mites commonly affect cats and can be easily spread from cat to cat if they are in close contact or in the same household.

### What are the signs of ear mites?

Ear mites are almost impossible to see with the naked eye, however typically infections produce a dark coloured, crusty, black discharge, often accompanied by an unpleasant smell.

Some other signs that can be associated with ear mites include:

- Excessive scratching of the ears
- Shaking of the head
- Inflammation of the ears



### What to do if you suspect your pet has ear mites?

If left untreated, ear mites can be extremely painful as infections can develop secondary to these mites, and if inflammation of the ear is left for too long it can require surgery to correct. If you suspect your pet may have ear mites, or is displaying any of the above symptoms, please make sure you call your local vet and bring your pet in for an examination.

### Treatment for ear mites

Ear mites are a type of external parasite and can usually be treated successfully with an application of a topical parasiticide spot-on treatment (such as Revolution or Advocate). If secondary infection is present medicated ear drops or ointment and sometimes even anti-inflammatory medication may be required to help with the itch and additional infection.