

Boykin Spaniel Ear Care
BSCBAA Health and Genetics Committee Zoom Meeting
Led by Dr. Bill Howard, DVM, August 12, 2021

Ear Anatomy

- External, Middle Ear and Inner Ear
 - a. 99% of all ear infections are in the external part of the ear
- Boykin Spaniels have spaniel or retriever-type ears which makes them unique from other dogs.
- Their ears contain excess wax to help waterproof them, and their ear flap covering their ear prevents air flow, which can cause problems.
- There is a certain amount of bacteria flora and yeast that is normal to have in the ear. An overgrowth of these conditions causes the infection.
- Some dogs fight ear infections better than others.
- You should look inside their ear canal once-twice a week to make sure it is normal. Abnormal is odor, wrinkles, redness, or other things out of the norm for your dog.

When you take a dog to the vet:

- They should start with a full-body exam.
- They should use an otoscope to look all the way into the ear canal and see the ear drum.
- They should take a sample of what is in the ear. (Could be wax, yeast, pus, hard, discharge) Then examine it under the microscope.
- Then they should clean the ear well before medicine is applied.
- Then choose the right medicine for the specific type of infection.
- Ear mites are common in puppies but unusual after 6 months, unless there's a puppy in the house.

Ear Treatment

- If the infection is ongoing or chronic there may also be oral antibiotics prescribed.
- Yeast or fungal infections may take 3-4 weeks to heal.
- If you don't see improvement in 5-7 days, take the dog back to the vet, so they can do a culture and sensitivity test. Take a sample of what is in the ear and send it to a lab that will help identify the correct medicine to treat it.
- Preventions- one to cut wax, antiseptic, astringent to remove moisture.
 - a. DSS (dioctyl sodium sulfosuccinate) - will cut wax
 - b. antiseptic- acetic acid
 - c. chlorhexidine – reduces infections
 - d. Astringents

- i. isopropyl alcohol,
- ii. salicylic acid-
- iii. Commonly used medicines
- iv. Zymox in stubborn infections

Ear protection and prevention

- Keep water in ears to a minimum. Allow them to shake their ears well after a bath, swimming, water retrieve
- Use ear cleaners regularly.
- Use preventatives regularly
- Use the correct antibiotic and antifungal, and use the full treatment, don't stop treatment early even if everything looks completely healed.

Ear grooming

- Use an ear rake to remove knots, tangles.
- Lift the ear and clip hair below the ear to improve airflow.
- Shaving the ear is not recommended because it inhibits the flow of scents to the nose in the field.

Questions & Answer Discussion

- Apoquel is a good seasonal preventative in dogs with allergies. Or Benadryl if preferred.
- Scratching ears, shaking ears, licking/chewing on feet are also indicators of dog allergies.
- Is it possible to clean the ears too much?
 - a. Yes, because it can leave the ear vulnerable for worse bacterial infections.
- Dogs frequently in pools- they should use the preventative in the ear 1-2 times a week but monitor your dog frequently.
- In very severe cases, there is a laser treatment that can help reduce inflammation.
- After swimming 50/50 alcohol and vinegar and fill the ear, then let them shake it out
- If you're going to bathe your dog, you can stick a cotton ball in their ears while bathing, then treat the ear afterwards.
- Cerumene - it cuts wax, ear cleaner