

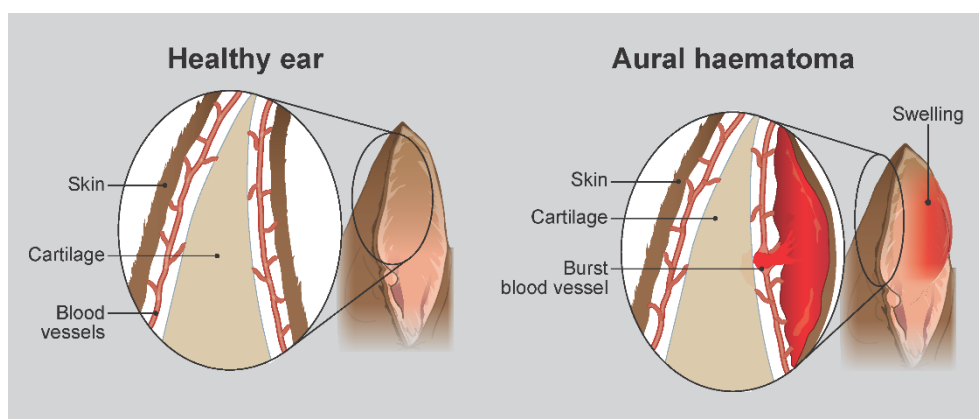
## Aural Haematoma in a Dog

### Overview

- An aural haematoma is a blood blister that forms inside an earflap after a blood vessel bursts.
- Your dog is most likely to have developed an aural haematoma if they have been shaking their head, or scratching their ear too hard because of an ear infection, ear mites or a skin problem.
- As well as treating the haematoma, your vet will try to find out why it happened in the first place.
- Treatment is likely to include medication to make your dog more comfortable, draining the ear and possibly surgery.
- Book an appointment with your vet if your dog develops an aural haematoma - **never try to treat it yourself**.

### What is an aural haematoma?

An aural haematoma is a blood blister that forms inside an earflap after a blood vessel bursts. Aural haematomas most commonly develop when a dog shakes their head or scratches their ear too hard (usually due to [an ear infection](#), [ear mites](#) or [itchy skin](#)).

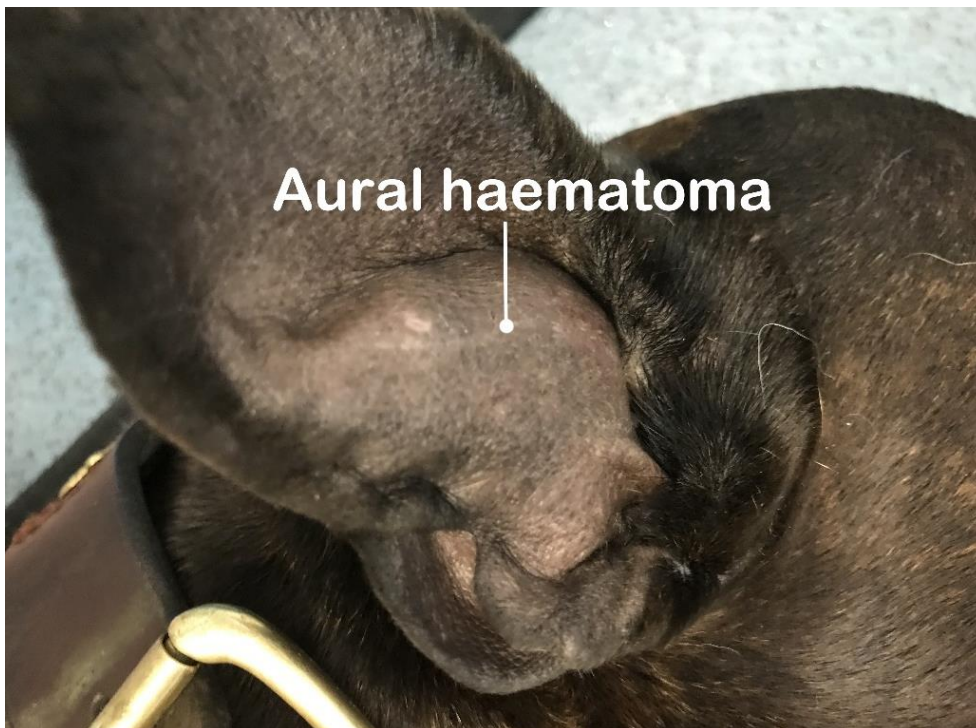


Aural haematomas can also sometimes develop because of a knock or injury to the ear.

## Symptoms

Aural haematomas usually develop very suddenly and cause the following symptoms:

- [A swollen, droopy earflap](#)
- [Head shaking](#)
- [Ear scratching](#)
- Head tilt (holding the head to one side)
- [A red, painful, irritated ear](#)



## When to contact your vet

Call your vet for an appointment as soon as you notice an aural haematoma. They will give your dog medication to them more comfortable, investigate the cause and make a treatment plan.

**Am I eligible for PDSA veterinary treatment?**

## Treatment

An aural haematoma can be treated a number of different ways, depending on the cause and how large it is. The main treatment options include:

- **Medication**
- **Draining the earflap**
- **Surgery**

### Medication

- Most aural haematomas need to be drained, but if your dog has a swelling that isn't causing much pain or discomfort, it may be possible to treat them with medicines alone.
- Your dog will be prescribed anti-inflammatories to help with any swelling and pain and other medications for the underlying cause (i.e. [ear infection](#), [ear mites](#) or [a skin problem](#)).
- It's important to be aware that without being drained, there is always the chance that your dog's earflap will become permanently thickened and crinkly.
- You will need to monitor your dog closely and return to your vet if their swelling gets larger, or becomes painful.

### Draining

- If your dog has a large or painful aural haematoma, it will need draining.
- This can be done using a needle and syringe or an indwelling plastic drain (see below).
- Left undrained, large aural haematomas are often painful, scar and cause a thickened, crinkly earflap (like a rugby player with 'cauliflower ear').

### Surgery

- If your dog's aural haematoma refills after it's been drained, your vet may advise surgery.
- Surgery involves making a drainage hole and stitching the earflap so it can't refill with blood.



Ideally this drain will stay in place for a few days to remove new blood.

## Homecare

You will need to keep your dog's ear clean and protected while it heals.

- Give your dog all their prescribed medication.
- Monitor them for pain, swelling and redness.
- It's normal for an aural haematoma to leak a small amount of blood for a few days after being drained. However, if you are worried that your dog's ear is bleeding more than expected, call your vet for advice.
- Use a [buster collar](#) (head cone) until their ear has healed. You will need to wash the collar daily and make sure your dog wears it 24:7.
- If your vet asks you to clean your dog's ear, use warm salty water once a day. You will need to be very gentle so not to disturb healing.

## Outlook

Your dog should recover within one-two weeks if their ear heals without complications.

## Cost

Treatment for an aural haematoma can become expensive, if your dog requires surgery. Consider [insuring your dog](#) as soon as you get them, before any signs of illness start. This will ensure you have all the support you need to care for them.

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