

Head shaking in dogs

Overview

- Has your dog been shaking his/her head more than usual?
- Head shaking shouldn't be ignored because it can indicate many different problems, usually related to the ears.
- Contact your vet for an appointment if you have noticed your dog shaking their head more than usual. Your vet will be able to find the cause, treat it, and ease their symptoms.



Why do dogs shake their heads?

Occasional head shaking is perfectly normal, but regular head shaking often indicates a problem. Common causes include:

- Ear infection
- Aural haematoma
- Ear mites
- Something stuck inside the ear (foreign body)
- Ear injury
- Allergic or inflammatory skin disease
- A lump (growth) in the ear

Let your vet know if you have noticed any other symptoms such as itchy ears, smelly ears, face rubbing or loss of balance. If you take a careful look inside your dog's ears, you may even see that one (or both) of them look red, swollen or gunky.

When to contact your vet

Contact your vet for an appointment as soon as you notice your dog shaking their head more than usual. Your vet will be able to find the cause, treat it, and relieve their irritation.

Head tremors

It's important to know the difference between a head shake and a head tremor. A head shake is when your dog shakes their head on purpose, a head tremor is when they develop a shake that they can't control. If your dog suddenly develops a head tremor (a shake they cannot control), contact your vet for an emergency appointment.

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