

End-stage Ear Disease – Ear Canal Ablation

Surgery Service



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Specialistssm**

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Locations

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1425 Michigan St. NE
(East of Fuller Rd.)
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29080 Inkster Rd.
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Surgical ear diseases

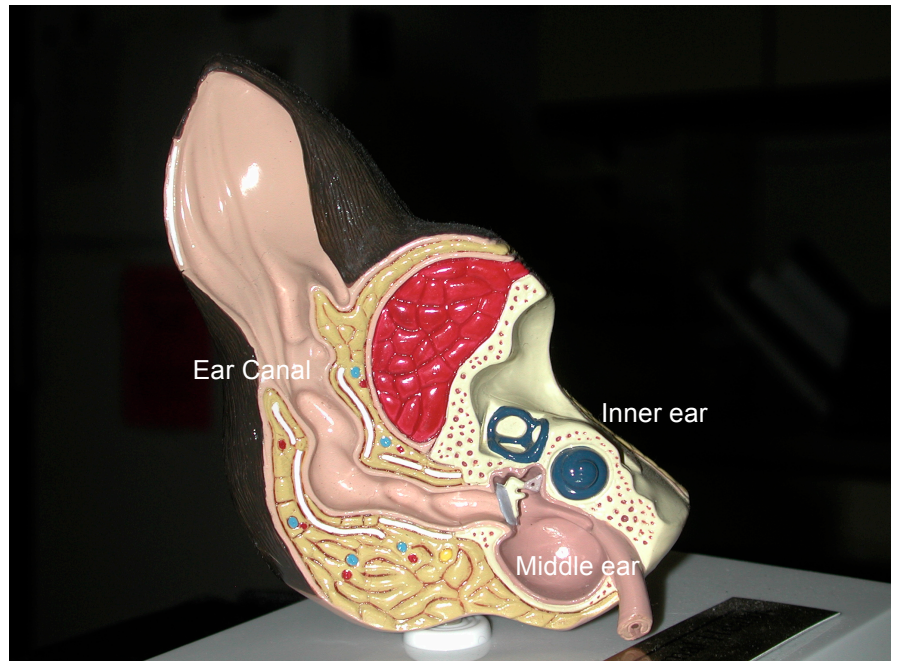
Dogs that have long-standing ear infections may develop irreversible disease of the ear canal. Due to chronic inflammation, the ear canal becomes very thickened and can turn into bone. As a result, the infection will not resolve with medications. In about 50% of these patients, the eardrum is ruptured and a middle ear infection is present. Frequently dogs with chronic ear infections have skin allergies; therefore, a dermatologist should evaluate your companion after the surgery.

Another condition that affects the ear canals is cancer. Of the tumors that affect the ear canal in dogs, 85% of them are adenocarcinoma, a malignant tumor. Surgery is usually curative for such tumors of the ear canal if there is no invasion of the cancer through the cartilage layer of the ear canal or into the middle ear cavity.

Anatomy

The ear canal is a long tube that originates at the base of the earflap and extends to the eardrum to form the external ear. The facial nerve, which controls muscles of facial expression and the eyelids, wraps around the ear canal. The middle ear is a hollow cavity within the skull that is separated by the eardrum and

contains three fine bones that transmit sound to the inner ear. The balance organ and a hearing organ that changes sound into electrical signals are located in the inner ear.



Signs and diagnosis

Signs of ear infection or ear canal tumors include shaking of the head, scratching the ear, rubbing the ear, crying out in pain, sensitivity when the ear is touched, thickened ear canals, foul odor from the ear, and bloody or yellow/green discharge in the ear canal. If the infection extends into the inner ear, your companion may keep the head in a tilted position, may have continual shifting of the eyes, or walking in circles. Dogs that have end-stage ear disease do not respond to medical treatment.

Your veterinarian will examine the ear to see if a tumor is in the canal or if there is chronic irreversible infection. A complete blood count, chemistry profile, and urine testing are performed prior to surgery to allow us to select the best anesthetic protocol for your

Ear Canal Ablation Continued...

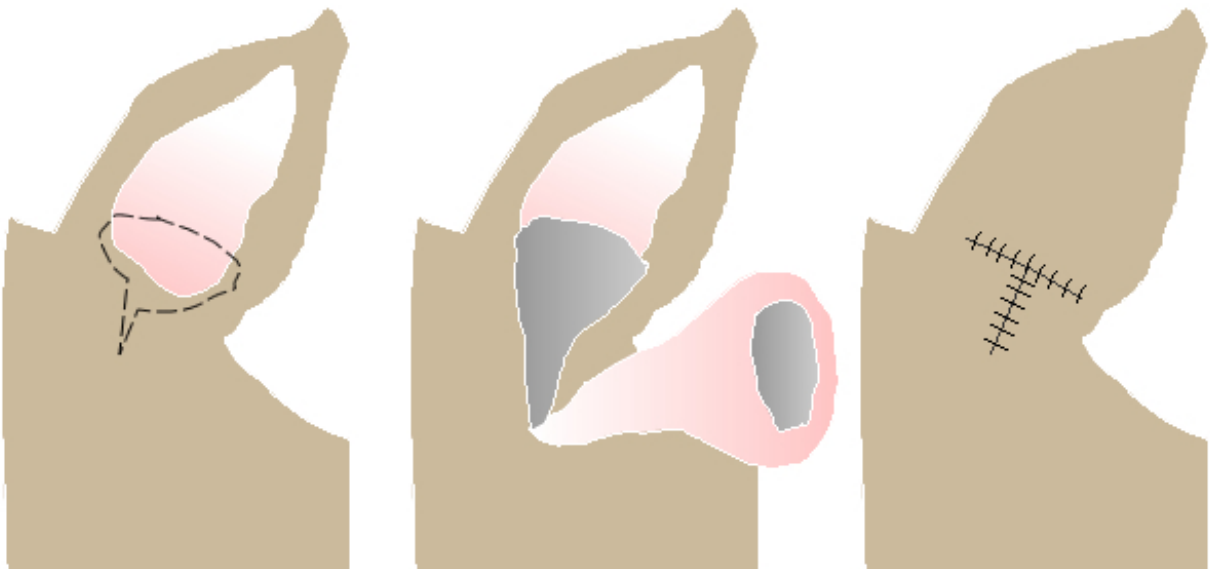
companion. Radiographs (x-rays) of the chest are made if a tumor is in the ear canal to help check for spread of the cancer to the lungs. CT scan of the head can be used to evaluate the extent of a chronic ear infection or tumor.

The day of surgery

Our anesthesia and surgical team will prescribe a pain management program, both during and after surgery that will keep your companion comfortable. This will include a combination of general anesthesia, injectable analgesics, a pain patch that delivers analgesics through the skin and oral analgesics.

Treatment

For patients that have a tumor or end-stage age ear infections, surgical removal of the diseased ear canal is recommended. In addition, a bulla osteotomy is performed, which involves removal of the outer wall of the middle ear chamber in order to extract infected or cancerous tissue from this region. After the incision has been closed there will be no visible opening into the ear canal, yet most dogs that have the procedure performed on both ears still



seem to hear sounds. Your pet will stay in our hospital for one night after surgery, providing that recovery is uncomplicated.

Aftercare and results

After surgery, you can continue to give your pet a prescribed pain reliever to minimize discomfort. Antibiotics are

Ear Canal Ablation Continued...

prescribed for a period of two weeks after surgery. A bandage and an Elizabethan collar will be used prevent your pet from scratching the surgical site. It's also important to limit your dog's activity for two weeks after surgery. The healing process will be monitored by the surgeon with two follow-up exams. The first is scheduled for two weeks after the surgery and the second is at eight weeks after the surgery. By 2 weeks after surgery, the incision should be healed and your companion should be feeling well again.

About 10% of the dogs that have a total ear canal ablation surgery will develop facial nerve paralysis. Signs of this include drooping of the face and inability to close the eyelids. Facial nerve paralysis usually is a temporary problem and resolves within 3 months. Less common complications include pain upon opening the mouth, bleeding into the tissues of the neck (which causes breathing difficulty), Horner's syndrome (pupil constricts and third eyelid covers part of the eye), vestibular syndrome (balance problems), and recurrent infection. Although these complications are serious, they are seen in less than 5% of the patients and usually resolve with time. Infection unresponsive to antibiotics will require a second surgery. In general, most pet owners usually report that their dog "is acting like a puppy again" after healing takes place.

Assessment and recommendations

Patient: _____ Date: _____

Treatment

- Surgery is recommended
- Surgery is not recommended – please consult a dermatologist for further care

The following has been prescribed

- No medications or special diet are necessary at this time
- Prescription joint diet: _____
- Analgesics: _____
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication: _____
- Antibiotics: _____

Exercise

- Unlimited
- Confine your pet to the house other than very short leash walks necessary for bowel movements and urination
- Restrict exercise to leash walks 10 minutes twice daily

Preparation for surgery

- Start fasting your companion at midnight before the surgery; water should not be withheld
- Pepcid AC 10 mg tablets: give _____ tablet(s) with water (use a syringe if needed) at 6 AM on the day of surgery

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