I will show you a simple, effective and fast way to repair a hematoma of the canine or feline ear. It will produce results that are much better than using multiple mattress sutures, which will cause a lot of irritation and damage to ear or trying to aspirate and inject with a steroid. You can expect the ear to return to normal in a very short time.

You will need to have plastic sheeting or top of coffee can or other plastic. I like to get plastic cutting board material. Place ear on plastic and use felt tip pen to trace outline of ear. Then cut out being sure to round corners so as to prevent irritation. These pieces of plastic should be full shape of ear. Then using this as a pattern cut a second piece being sure when you place plastic on ear (one on each side) that they match.

The first thing that you will need after you have animal under anesthesia is to try to determine cause of hematoma and try to correct it along with the surgery. Most hematomas are the result of head shaking which can be from infection, parasites or foreign bodies. I examine both ears then clip hair on both sides of ear. After clipping hair I clean both ear canals and then prep ear for surgery. I always instil otic ointment in both ears. Always put cotton in ear canal of ear to have surgery. Leave cotton in ear until animal is awake and up. Open hematoma from end to end, most will start at tip of ear and extend toward head. Be sure to remove any clotted blood and fibrin from ear.

Place precut plastics one on each side of ear paying attention to location of incision. Take an Allison tissue forceps and clamp it tightly over both pieces of plastic and where clamp is over incision. Place two or three mattress sutures through plastic on each side of incision keeping plastic straight. I use a straight needle with #0 or #1 non absorbable suture material making suture approximately ¾ inch long. Start sutures from under side of ear so that knot will be on under side. Sutures must be parallel to incision. Do not place sutures across ear as you may disrupt blood supply, vein goes with the ear and not across. The sutures need to be tight to hold pressure on the ear to prevent hematoma formation. The sutures will need to stay in for 10 days.

I do not try to bandage ear or use a cone. All dogs will shake head because of plastic, but it does not seem to cause any problem with healing. Advise owner that there may be small amount of bleeding with head shaking for several days and to protect walls and furniture. There is also small amount of bleeding from needle puncture but most will be cleaned up after surgery. Remove cotton from ear. Dispense otic ointment for BID use for several days.

After 10 days when you are removing sutures, clip all sutures in middle of suture on top of ear(knot on bottom) then take both pieces of plastic and remove at once. The ear will naturally have some offensive odor due to blood that is trapped between ear and plastic. Take hydrogen peroxide and clean both sides of ear. This will remove most of the odor. Dispense more otic ointment to be used for several more days.

I have tried to keep this brief due to time allotted. If you have any questions please feel free to ask and I will attempt to answer and clarify.

Thank you for stopping by and good luck with your next hematoma repair.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me at jdavant@msn.com.