

PREVENTING PERIODONTAL DISEASE

We all know what happens to us when we don't take care of our teeth. But most of us don't realize...that our pets suffer from dental complications too.

You can save the pain of dental disease if you learn about proper dental care for your pet, and how to spot potential problems before they become serious.

Problems with the gums and teeth are known as **PERIODONTAL DISEASE**. Periodontal disease is a major problem in both the dog and cat. Regular check-ups are the best method to prevent problems and complications.

Periodontal disease causes over 75% of all pet dental problems. In advanced stages, your pet might have...foul-smelling breath, excessive accumulations of tartar, and loose teeth. They may also have a loss of appetite or be unduly irritable...because of the pain involved with infection. **Periodontal disease hurts!!**

Food first accumulates between the tooth and gum forming a substance called "**plaque**." If the plaque is not removed, it will allow bacterial growth. This bacterium is the start of Periodontal Disease. The bacteria invade the gums, leading to inflammation and the formation of another substance called "**calculus**." Calculus is a hard, irritating substance that can be best removed at your pet hospital in a procedure called "scaling." If this is not done, pus pockets will form around the root of the tooth, causing further separation of the tooth and gum and possibly destroying bone that holds the teeth. At this point, the tooth can no longer be saved.

Untreated Periodontal Disease will leave your pet with a constant source of infection that can spread throughout the body through the bloodstream. It can enter the bloodstream through the bleeding gums caused by the infection. Heart, liver, and kidney problems may often result. Proper care of the mouth preventing these conditions can add years to the life of your pet and certainly make it more comfortable and pleasant to be around.

Preventing Periodontal Disease should be a major concern for you. The best prevention is proper dental hygiene to promote teeth and gum health and slow the rate of tartar formation.

Follow these tips for good oral hygiene:

- Feed at least some hard food, which will provide a cleaning action. Prescription Diet t/d® is available for both dogs and cats and can be used as a treat every day. Hard food is also encouraged to help remove early soft plaque accumulation, but will not prevent the problem alone, no more than if you were to stop brushing your teeth and simply eat a piece of hard candy each day.
- Have teeth examined at least once every year for tartar buildup. Pets vary considerably in the amount of tartar that accumulates. Have a dental prophylaxis procedure performed when recommended by your veterinarian.
- Use a pet dentrifice on a regular basis. We will be happy to recommend what is best for your pet.



OPTIONS INCLUDE:

- CET Chews® are available for both dogs and cats.
- CET Rinse is a liquid that is accepted well by the pet. It is simply squirted on the teeth and gums
- With your finger. Pet toothpaste is available. Human toothpaste should not be used since it can be toxic if swallowed by the pet. Don't worry about the tongue side of the teeth; the roughness of the pet's tongue will usually do an adequate cleaning job there. Most pets will accept a toothbrush if time is taken for the pet to get accustomed to it.

Preventive dental health will help save your pet's teeth, help avoid stress related problems caused by pain, and provide protection from liver, kidney, and heart disease which are the major killers of older pets. Proper dental care at home is the most significant factor in preventing painful damage to your pet's teeth. Regular dental examinations by your veterinarian can result in early diagnosis and timely treatment of most dental problems.

Our staff is professionally trained to clean, scale, and polish your pet's teeth. We will examine your pet's mouth and then make the appropriate recommendations for therapy.

Good dental health for your pet is up to you!

