

Dental Months

We all realize the importance of our own dental routines to prevent the occurrence of dental disease within ourselves; dental care for our pets is equally important. Dental disease or periodontal disease is the most widespread disease associated with 80% of dogs and 70% of cats. It can lead to irritated gums, painful dental infections, tooth loss and can cause bacteria to travel through the bloodstream and compromise vital organs. Fortunately, with a proper dental routine designed for our pets, periodontal disease in most cases is preventable.

Steps to preventing periodontal disease:

- 1. Routine examinations by your veterinarian.** During all routine exams your veterinarian will assess the oral health of your pet. By looking at and inside the mouth they will determine if there are any signs of disease and if a more vigorous routine must be put into action. If the disease has progressed too far for at home care to resolve it, your veterinarian may recommend a dental here at the clinic. This will include a scale and polish of the teeth and possibly removal of any teeth that cannot be saved.
- 2. Regular brushing at home.** Regular brushing of your animal's teeth is essential in removing the plaque that causes periodontal disease. Although it may sound difficult it is fairly easy to start to brush your pet's teeth at any age. You may have to ease into it at first but many pets do not mind the process of brushing their teeth. Flavoured toothpastes can be bought at the front desk to make the experience more enjoyable!

3. Dental diets. Special formulated diets may be used to remove the daily build up of plaque that may be missed by brushing or for problematic pets that will not allow brushing at all. Diets such as Prescription Hill's t/d, is specially designed to remove plaque and is highly palatable.

Signs of periodontal disease:

- Bad Breath
- Hard yellow or brown build-up on teeth
- Red and bleeding gums
- Difficulty eating or chewing
- Drooling
- Tooth loss
- Pain when face is touched
- Swelling under the eye

Causes of periodontal disease:

Periodontal disease starts with the build-up of plaque (a colourless film that contains bacteria) on the tooth's surface. If the plaque is not removed or brushed away then it can create an infection that will destroy your animal's gums and the tissue as well as the bone holding the teeth in place. And when left over longer periods of time the plaque then turns into a hard yellow or brown build up called tartar.

Call today and book a **FREE** dental exam with one of our technicians. They will check out your furry friend's teeth, recommend a dental program that suits your pet's needs, answer any questions you have, give you a demonstration on brushing and if necessary discuss getting your pet's teeth cleaned.