



Dental Information Packet



Noah's Ark
VETERINARY HOSPITAL

7297 Richmond Rd.

Williamsburg, VA 23188

Phone: 757-564-9815

Website: www.noahsarkvet.com

Dental Information Packet

Keeping your pet's oral health up to snuff is important. Poor oral hygiene with subsequent tartar, gingivitis, periodontal disease and resorptive enamel lesion (in cats) can all lead to a painful mouth and is the leading cause of premature aging in our pets. Periodontal disease can serve as a source of infection that enters the blood stream and affects overall kidney, liver, lung, and heart health. Together we can create a program that suits your lifestyle and meets the needs of your family friend.

Information included in this packet:

- Dental Care
- Brushing Your Pet's Teeth
- Maintaining Your Pet's Oral Health and Fresh Breath
- Stages of Oral Health and Disease
- Dental Cleaning- What's All Involved?
- Feline Resorptive Lesions



Dental Care



Before Dental Cleaning (Cat)



After Dental Cleaning (Cat)



Before Dental Cleaning (Dog)



After Dental Cleaning (Dog)

Dental Disease is the most common illness encountered in veterinary medicine today and affects 9 out of 10 pets. Unfortunately, it is also the most untreated disease. Pets often go for years with painful gingivitis or even severe tooth root abscess without noticeable clinical signs to the owner. Many owners often comment that their pet does not act painful and are still eating normally, unfortunately, they will not until their dental disease is very advanced.

Dental disease puts tremendous demand on your pet's organs, weakening the liver, kidneys, and heart. This additional stress can lessen your pet's quality of life and shorten life expectancy. Fortunately, there have been many advances in veterinary dentistry that can treat and help prevent dental disease.

Periodontal disease begins as gingivitis, an inflammation of the gums. Gingivitis is reversible if treated promptly. Left untreated, it advances to periodontitis and affects the structures and bone surrounding the teeth, leading eventually to tooth loss, but not before your pet has experienced significant discomfort.

Bad breath is often the first sign of periodontal disease. Because "doggy breath" is so common, this sign of disease is often dismissed or not considered abnormal. In fact, the odor is bacteria, food particles and saliva accumulating at the gum line, forming plaque on the teeth. If the plaque is not removed, it hardens into tartar, which is difficult to remove with brushing. Tartar encourages further bacterial growth, causing the gingiva to regress and pockets to form. These pockets further trap bacteria and the continued infection weakens the tooth's support and exposes its roots. Finally, the tooth loosens and falls out, but not before your pet has suffered significant discomfort.

As with all diseases, prevention is the best strategy. A preventative oral health program includes proper diet, regular home care (brushing), and regular tooth cleaning by a veterinary professional. The precise plan will vary for each pet depending on factors such as breed, existing dental disease, and agreeability to regular brushing.

Maintaining Your Pet's Oral Health and Fresh Breath



CET Enzymatic Toothpaste for Dogs & Cats: The number of products available to help keep your pet's teeth clean and healthy is astounding. Even with all the products currently on the market, daily brushing combines with regular professional cleaning and scaling remains the best method for maintaining oral health.

CET Enzymatic Toothpaste for Dogs & Cats is available in poultry or malt flavor. Dual- Enzyme system formulated to be safe when swallowed by your pet. Acts quickly to help neutralize mouth odors.



Oxyfresh Pet Oral Hygiene Solution with Oxygene is the most effective remedy that helps stop bad breath at its source! We all love our pets, but the fact is their breath is sometimes downright unpleasant. And more importantly, the microorganisms that cause bad breath and periodontal disease can actually shorten your dog's or cat's lifespan. Just a capful of Oxyfresh Pet Oral Hygiene Solution with

Oxygene in your pet's water bowl and you pet will have "up close" fresh breath every day.



Chews: Enzadent Chews for dogs and cats combine enzymes found naturally in your pet's saliva with natural abrading action to help remove food debris. The enzymes in the chew discourage plaque formation. Please note that all toys/chews should be supervised to prevent ingestion of too large a piece that can cause intestinal upset or blockage.



Hill's T/D is formulated specifically for the nutritional management of dogs and cats with dental disease. Its special fiber matrix scrubs the exposed tooth surface like an edible toothbrush, reducing bacteria-laden plaque. Many dental diets contain a polyphosphate coating that helps keep plaque from mineralizing. All dental diets are helpful but not a cure-all; may result in 15% to 30% decrease in plaque.



Milk-Bone® Brushing Chews™ help provide an easy and effective way to help take care of your dog's teeth. These daily dental treats are clinically proven to reduce tartar and plaque build-up, as well as fight bad breath. The unique dental twist bone is designed to help clean even hard to reach back teeth and down to the gumline. Dogs love the irresistible chicken taste of Milk-Bone® Brushing Chews™, and you'll love giving them a daily dental treat that's fortified with 12 essential vitamins and minerals, including calcium for strong bones and teeth.



OraVet Dental Hygiene Chews provide easy, daily oral care that fights the source of bad breath— as well as plaque and tartar. The chewing action works to loosen and dislodge plaque to help it break away from teeth. Then OraVet chews form a barrier to help protect against the bacteria that leads to plaque and calculus buildup for a cleaner mouth and fresher breath.

Stages of Oral Health and Disease



Stage 1, Gingivitis- The gum (or gingiva) at the top of teeth is inflamed and swollen, and plaque covers the teeth. Treatment can reverse this condition.



Stage 2, Early Periodontitis- The entire attached gum is inflamed and swollen. The pet's mouth is painful, and bad breath is noticeable. Professional treatment and home dental care can prevent this from becoming irreversible.

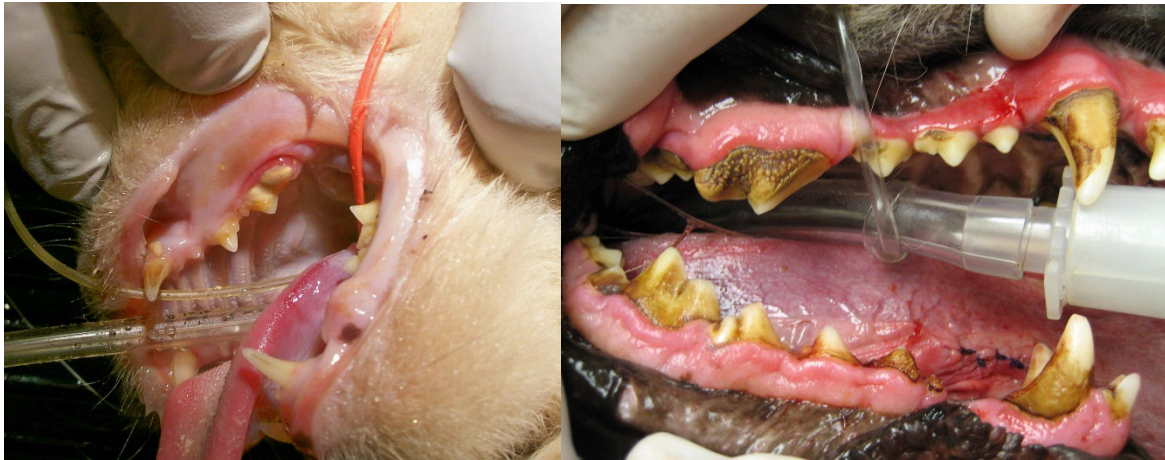


Stage 3, Moderate Periodontitis- Infection and calculus are destroying the gum now bright red and bleeding. The pet's mouth is sore, which can affect eating and behavior. Periodontitis has started and may be irreversible.



Stage 4, Advanced Periodontitis- Chronic bacterial infection is destroying the gum, teeth, and bone. Bacteria may be spreading in the bloodstream throughout the body, which can damage the kidneys, liver, and heart.

A Dental Cleaning- What's all involved?



Step 1- Supragingival Cleaning: This involves cleaning the area above the gumline. This includes removing significant tartar buildup and is initially accomplished by mechanical scalers followed by ultrasonic scaling in our animal patients. This increases the speed in which the cleaning can be performed, and decreases anesthetic time.

Step 2- Subgingival Cleaning: This involves cleaning the area under the gumline (subgingival). In our patients, this is one of the most important steps. The subgingival plaque and calculus is what causes periodontal disease. This is the most common ailment of the oral cavity diagnosed in all animal patients. Cleaning the tooth surface alone will make the teeth look nice, but in reality has done little medically for the patients overall health.

Step 3- Polishing: Polishing smooth's the tooth surface and decreases the adhesive ability of future plaque formation. During steps 1 and 2, the mechanical removal of the plaque and calculus cause microscopic roughening of the tooth surface which increases the retentive ability of the tooth for re-development of post-cleaning plaque and calculus and periodontal disease progression. Polishing diminishes the likelihood of this progression.

Step 4- Subgingival/Sulcal Lavage: The scaling and polishing of the teeth will cause a lot of debris to become trapped under the gums. This will cause local inflammation, as well as increase the chance of future periodontal disease. For this reason we gently flush the gingiva with an antibacterial solution.

Step 5- Treatment Planning: This is the step where the teeth and entire oral cavity are evaluated, using not only our eyes, but a periodontal probe to determine if there are significant gaps or spaces between the gum and tooth root known as periodontal pockets. Finally, dental radiographs are taken to further assess the tooth roots and surrounding bone. Using all of these modalities, a plan is developed (with the owners input) to reestablish the patient's oral health.

Step 6- Dental Radiographs: Dental radiographs are taken to further assess the tooth roots and surrounding bone. This allows the doctor to evaluate the tooth for root abscesses, feline resorptive lesions below the gumline, and overall tooth root and jaw bone health. We strongly recommend performing dental radiographs for all dental cleaning procedures, however it is an optional service for our clients.

Step 7- Fluoride Treatment: Fluoride foam is used to impregnate the teeth with fluoride. The benefits of fluoride are that it hardens the dentin, has anti-plaque activity, and is reported to retard the formation of feline oral resorptive lesions.

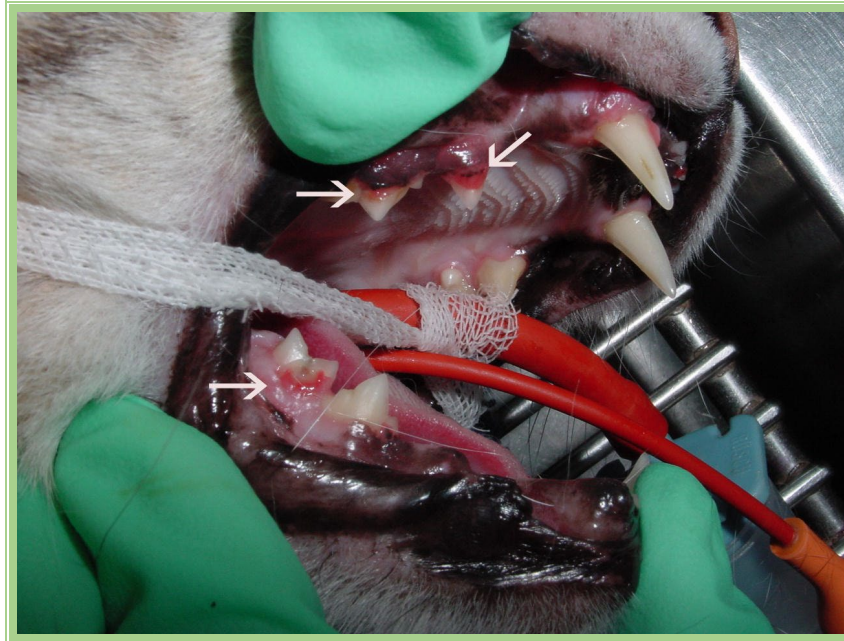
Step 8- Dental Charting: All of the pertinent oral findings and treatment rendered during this cleaning as well as areas of the mouth we want to reevaluate in the future is placed on a dental chart in the patient's permanent medical record. This will allow us to follow the patient's progress (or regression) through the years.

During all dental cleaning procedures your pet is monitored with state of the art monitoring equipment. An assistant monitors parameters during the entire anesthetic process.

These are the steps we follow to ensure each pet leaves with a clean mouth. However, dental care does not end here. Within 24 hours, plaque has already started to form on the teeth and the periodontal disease process starts over. This is where **Home Care** comes in. Regular brushing, dental diets, chew and treats, and special rinses all help to minimize the accumulation of dental tartar and progression of periodontal disease. Together we can work to keep your pet's oral cavity clean and free of disease. This will not only improve oral

comfort, but will also extend the quality of your pet's life. Although it may seem like a lot to put your pet through, many owners tell us their pet feels much better and is more active, after a dental cleaning.

Feline Oral Resorptive Lesions

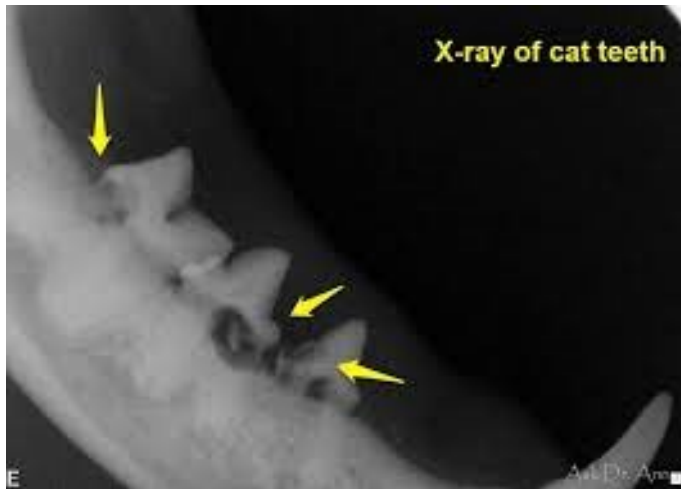


Feline tooth resorption is a common and painful condition in domestic cats. The teeth become functionally destroyed as sections of tooth are resorbed leaving areas of exposed tooth tissue below the enamel and weakened roots. The lesions were originally called feline “neck lesions” or cat “cavities” because the tooth damage was typically observed in the “neck” region of the tooth where the tooth meets the gum line. Neck lesions can appear as areas of reddened tissue at the tooth–gum interface almost as if the gingival (gum) tissue is growing into the tooth or is covering over the base of the tooth. In some cases, there appears to be a “hole” or concavity in the tooth (shown in radiographic image below).

The exact cause of tooth resorption has not been definitively established, but we do know that the bacteria found in the oral cavity will make these lesions worse. Therefore maintenance of good oral hygiene will help discourage progression. It has been reported that 60% of cats over 6 years of age have at least one of these resorptive lesions and once diagnosed will very likely develop additional lesion in the future. For this reason, annual dental exams, cleanings, and radiographs are essential to monitor these cats to allow for early diagnosis and treatment.

Since bacteria in the mouth worsen the inflammation and pain associated with resorptive neck lesions it is ideal to manage oral hygiene through brushing your

cat's teeth daily or three times weekly at a minimum. This is your opportunity to observe your cat's oral health. Watch for the gum tissue growing onto or into tooth resorption defects. Also observe for excess salivation, gums that bleed easily when brushed, gingival inflammation, and reluctance to chew hard foods. If brushing is not possible, see our section on other products that can be used in the maintenance of oral health.



This dental x-ray demonstrates the appearance of these feline resorptive lesions. Note the obvious cavitated lesions (arrows).