

Dental Health And Your Pet

Most people don't realize the impact dental hygiene can have on your pets' overall health. By age 3, most dogs and cats have some evidence of periodontal disease. Periodontal disease begins when food particles and bacteria are allowed to accumulate along the pet's gumline. It can form plaque which will harden into tartar that firmly adheres to teeth. You may notice some tartar on your pets' teeth, but the most serious bacteria is from plaque that has spread under the gumline, causing gum irritation and an inflammatory condition called gingivitis. This bacteria can potentially spread to the bloodstream causing liver and kidney disease, infections of the heart and lungs, diabetes, and autoimmune diseases.



Periodontal disease in pets is very common but fortunately it is easily preventable. Follow some of these tips for controlling dental disease and providing your pets with a healthy, happy, long life!



Perform routine mouth inspections. If possible, begin this at an early age. Your pet should be comfortable with you opening his mouth, looking inside, and feeling around for loose teeth or unusual bumps. Make note during these inspections of foul odors, inflammation, and any changes you are noticing.



Brush your pet's teeth regularly, preferably every day. Use an animal specific toothpaste. These are safe for your pet and flavored to be appealing to them. If your pet is uncomfortable having their teeth brushed, start slow by simply applying toothpaste to your finger and gently rubbing your finger along their gumline. Do this a few times each week and then begin to introduce the toothbrush.



If you can't brush your pet's teeth, ask us about other products that will help maintain proper dental health. Tartar control chews may reduce plaque and tartar formation simply by chewing. Products can be added to your pet's food and water to break down the biofilm made by bacteria, decreasing plaque and tartar buildup. Also, specially designed dental pet food will provide a complete balanced diet with added dental benefits.



Arrange regular exams with your veterinarian. We will alert you of any problems, discuss treatment options, and provide you with the best products to keep periodontal disease at bay.