



PET HEALTH



Dental Care

Did you know that around 70 - 80% of pets who are not on a proper dental program will suffer some form of dental disease by the age of 2?

It is an unfortunate statistic that we are working to avoid, as dental issues can be both harmful and painful to your pet.

How does pet dental disease occur?

Dental disease can manifest in our pets through plaque, which develops through a build-up of food particles and bacteria, calcifying into tartar or calculus. This process can;

- Destroy the supportive bone and tissues, weaken the teeth and cause bad breath as well as red, painful gums
- Cause significant pain and tooth loss
- Cause infection in the tissue around the gum and tooth, and abscesses can form
- Spread the gum infection to other parts of the body such as the kidneys and liver. This can potentially cause irreversible harm to your pet's health and will shorten their lifespan.



What are the signs of pet dental disease?

Some signs of dental disease to look out for are:

- Bad breath
- Inflamed red gums
- Bleeding or tender gums
- Chewing only on one side of the mouth
- Receding gum lines
- Inappetence
- Excessive drooling
- Pawing at the mouth or face

Some of these signs may be more obvious than others and some may become readily apparent as soon as your pet starts showing these problems. We all know how uncomfortable a painful tooth or sore mouth can be and the same feeling is experienced by our pets, however unlike humans, who

can take themselves to the dentist, a dog or cat cannot do this and we rely on tell-tale signs to suggest dental disease.

Dogs commonly spend more time in close contact with their owners and pant more in everyday activity which enables easier observation of their mouth, teeth and gums. Cats however tend to spend more time on their own and examining their mouths can be more difficult.

The best way to ensure your pet doesn't suffer from dental disease is to schedule regular check-ups with your local vet. This will ensure that not only are you staying on top of your pet's health, but also will help prevent any dental problems before they become serious health concerns.

How do I keep my pet's teeth clean?

There are several methods that can be utilised to help keep prevent dental disease in your dog or cat. We are all told from a young age that brushing your teeth every day helps keep them clean and and healthy and it is a similar case for dogs and cats. It is vital that some form of dental care is provided to your dog or cat each day to help keep their teeth clean and healthy too.



Some options to help with dental care in our pets include:

- Raw bones or raw hide treats for them to chew. This mechanical action will help break down the tartar on their teeth.
- Prescription dental diets, which can help break down tartar through chemical as well as mechanical methods.
- Regular brushing of their teeth with a proper pet toothbrush and pet toothpaste (often meat flavoured)

At times however a dental scale and polish and sometimes even extractions are required to help clean up moderate to severe dental disease. This needs to be performed at a veterinary clinic and will generally involve your pet undergoing a general anaesthetic.

If you are concerned about the current state of your pet's mouth and teeth and would like to know more about ways to help with their oral health care please contact the Animal Aid Veterinary Clinic.