



BAKENKOP
DIEREKLINIEK • ANIMAL CLINIC

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The TOOTH about ORAL HEALTH

Why should you care about your pet's teeth?

- About 85% of dogs and cats over 3 years of age will show some signs of dental disease.
- Dental disease causes pain and suffering
- Dental disease causes oral dysfunction
- Dental disease may cause diseases of other organs like the heart, kidneys and liver.
- Dental disease can be prevented
- A pet receiving regular dental care can live 3-5 years longer.

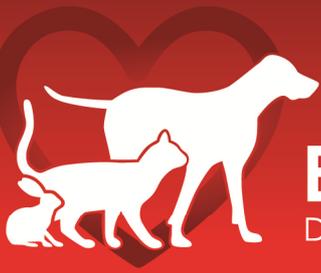
The Root of all evil

1. Gingivitis is the inflammation of the gingiva or gums and it occurs in response to plaque that builds up on the teeth.
2. Plaque is an accumulation of soft food, old gum cells and bacteria.
3. The plaque bacteria produce toxins which damage the gums and can lead to inflammation of the deeper supporting structures of the teeth.
4. Plaque is hardened by the minerals in the saliva and forms calculi on the teeth. This is the brownish, foul smelling rock hard stuff sticking to your dog's teeth.
5. Calculus is rough and promotes plaque accumulation aiding deeper inflammation of the gingiva.
6. Inevitably the teeth's supporting structures are eaten away and the teeth become loose. Your pet now has periodontitis which is irreversible.

What alerts you to oral disease?

How do you know your pet has gum disease?

- Bad breath
- Red and swollen gums
- Gums that easily bleed when touched / discoloured teeth
- Receding gums
- A yellow, brown crust of tartar on teeth
- Loose teeth
- Reluctance to eat/chew
- Going to the food bowl, but hissing or spitting at it or not eating
- Abnormal drooling
- Mouth pawing/rubbing
- Irritability/Depression
- Often Toy breeds have extra teeth as they retain some of their baby teeth (deciduous teeth should all be replaced by permanent teeth around 6 months of age). More teeth, more trapping of plaque.



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The progression of Dental Disease

Grade 1

- Plaque and minor calculus causing infection and swelling of the gums
- You will notice some redness of the gums
- Treatment involves a scale and polish



Grade 2

- Extensive plaque and calculus – causing inflammation and swelling of the gums. Some odour may be present and the condition is painful. This is the early stages of periodontitis.
- Treatment includes a more extensive scale and polish.



Grade 3

- Extensive calculus, red and sometimes bleeding gums, gum recession and pocket formation, and bad breath. Periodontitis is present. A sore mouth might affect eating and behaviour.
- Treatment may include extraction of several teeth.



Grade 4

- Chronic bacterial infection destroying the gums, teeth and bone. Severe periodontal disease is present.
- Treatment may involve extraction of several major teeth.



How do you prevent gum disease?

- It's easy with good oral hygiene and plaque control
- The 'GOOD': give your pets chews that will assist in teeth cleaning, such as a good quality balanced, dry food, dental kibbles and rawhide chews. A chew a day, will keep the dentist at bay!
- The 'BETTER': daily rinsing with a specially formulated pet dental rinse or daily application of oral gel.
- The 'BEST': daily brushing with a veterinary approved toothpaste remains the most effective method.



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What should you do, if you suspect your pet has gum disease?

- Treatment must start immediately. Severe periodontal disease is rarely reversible.
- Make an appointment with our health care team for a proper evaluation and recommendation.
- Intervening at an early stage prevents lengthy and sometimes costly procedures and ensures toothache free pet.
- We recommend a yearly evaluation. In human terms this would translate to visiting the dentist every seven years.

What should you avoid?

- Hard chews e.g. dried cow hooves or bones – it breaks teeth and wears them down prematurely.
- Inappropriate chews like sticks which injure gums.
- Avoid playing tug-of-war with toys with handles/ropes.
- Never pick your pet up while they are suspended from a toy.
- Do not use human toothpaste as they contain fluoride and detergents that are not good for our pets. Pet toothpastes may contain enzymes that continue to be of benefit long after the brushing episode. No spit and polish involved.

We remove the ‘rot’

- Our patients, unfortunately, do not respond well to “lie back, relax and open wide”.
- This, of course, means that a thorough examination can only be performed when our patients are anaesthetised.
- This makes quoting accurately for a dental procedure somewhat difficult.
- Just like your dentist, we use dental instruments, including an ultrasonic scaler, hand cures, air driven drills and polishers
- Where possible, we always try to save teeth. It is in our pet’s best interest to have a full dentition. However, if a tooth is too infected, or loose, or going to be a source of future problems, then we may need to remove it. Our pets cope quite well after teeth have been extracted.

Last word of advice...

Prevention pays – Neglect costs

Dental care assures a long and healthy



Virbac
ANIMAL HEALTH