

Dental Health and Your Pet

Did you know that up to 80% of dogs and 70% of cats that do not receive proper dental care may show signs of dental disease by the age of 3.

Dental care is often overlooked although dental disease can cause serious health problems in dogs and cats. These problems range from tooth loss to systemic disease and even organ damage.

That's why it is important to make sure your pet gets regular dental check-ups and that you pay attention to his or her dental care at home too.

Grade 1

We can see mild tartar build up on several to all the teeth in the mouth. Along with tartar, we notice that gingivitis is beginning to form (slight redness of the gum line).



Grade 2 : Early Dental Disease

There is moderate tartar covering most of the teeth. The gums are cherry red, irritated and can even be sore. You may also see the beginnings of gum recession. At this point the disease process can still be reversed.



Grade 3: Moderate Dental Disease

A disease process has begun with infection of the gum tissue as well as loose teeth, bleeding gums and bone loss. Harmful bacteria can enter the bloodstream and affect other organs.



Grade 4: Severe Dental Disease

Here, there is infection and recession of the gum tissue as well as great discomfort to the pet. There is also many loose and/or missing teeth. There is advanced bone loss, root exposure, and harmful bacteria that can enter the bloodstream and affect other organs.



Prevention and Care

The good news is dental disease can be prevented. Just like humans, pets need routine preventative dental care to fight off dental disease. Dental care can include routine brushing of the teeth, special dental diets and chews, and oral rinses. Pets also require routine dental cleanings. The need for a dental cleaning can be determined by your veterinarian.

Pets with Grade 3 or 4 dental disease should also receive routine cleanings and at home dental care to prevent the disease process from progressing and causing more harm to the pet.

You and your veterinarian can determine what care is best for your pet.