

Feline Dentistry



How would you feel if you didn't brush your teeth for years? Gross? That's how your cat's mouth feels—but it doesn't have to.

Why are regular dental treatments important for my cat?

Cats, like people, need regular dental care. Serious oral health problems can be addressed and prevented when you have your cat's teeth professionally treated at a veterinary hospital on a regular basis.

Dental disease begins with **plaque**, a soft, colourless, sticky film that results from the combination of food debris, bacteria and saliva. If plaque is not removed, it mineralizes and forms **calculus**. You may have noticed this hard material on your cat's teeth. If plaque and calculus are allowed to build up and are not removed, they can lead to **gingivitis**, an inflammation of the gums, which is painful. At this stage, gingivitis is reversible with professional dental care and regular brushing.

If gingivitis is left untreated, **periodontal disease**, a process that causes breakdown of the teeth's supporting structures will result. This will cause oral pain, loose teeth and oral infection. As periodontal disease progresses, the gums recede, allowing bacteria to travel via the blood to other parts of the body.

Why does my cat have to be anaesthetised?

To perform a thorough, safe, and comfortable dental procedure, your cat must be anaesthetised. To help ensure your cat's safety during treatment, we use the safest anaesthetic agents available. A technician will continually monitor your cat's temperature, pulse, breathing and other vital functions throughout the procedure until recovery. Because safety is our primary concern, we have equipment to assist us in monitoring your cat's condition at all times. We may also recommend testing, such as blood tests and x-rays, to further assess your cat.

How can I tell if my cat has oral disease?

Signs of oral disease:

- ◆ Red, swollen, or bleeding gums
- ◆ Pus along gum lines and around teeth
- ◆ Loose, broken or abscessed teeth
- ◆ Persistent foul odour
- ◆ Loss of appetite
- ◆ Pawing at the mouth
- ◆ Darkened, stained teeth
- ◆ Excessive drooling
- ◆ Sensitivity around the mouth

If your cat exhibits any of these symptoms, please call us.

What does a professional dental treatment involve? Once under anesthesia, we will thoroughly examine your cat's mouth. Each tooth is checked for calculus, cavities, fractures, looseness, infection or

other problems that may cause pain or threaten your cat's health. The dental procedure includes cleaning and polishing the teeth. Dental x-rays may be required to detect signs of infection or damage.