

DENTAL CARE RECOMMENDATIONS

The most common dental problem that we find in pets is far **worse** than cavities! It is called "**Periodontal Disease**". This disease affects the gums and other tissues around the teeth, instead of the teeth themselves.

About 75% of all dental problems serious enough to be seen by a veterinarian are the result of periodontal disease. It is also estimated that 75-80% of dogs and cats 3 years old or older have some degree of periodontal disease. It is the cause of 95% of all cases of "bad breath" and can result in infected loose teeth, and often there is a loss of appetite due to painful gums.



Plaque builds up on the tooth surface and then becomes **colonized with bacteria**, eventually forming a hard, "chalk-like" tartar buildup that causes erosion of the gums and inflammation and infection of the tooth socket. The teeth then become loose and the gums become reddened, swollen, and bleed easily. This condition becomes **very painful** for your pet.

These bacteria may even enter the bloodstream through the inflamed gums; and cause such problems as **heart valve infections, and kidney infections. Even signs such as diarrhea, vomiting and irritability may be the result of this disease. It is also possible for humans to develop eye infections from hand contamination from a pet's "dirty" mouth. Dental disease in our pets can also put us at increased risk for respiratory infections.**

Follow these tips for good oral hygiene for your pet:

- **Most experts recommend at least once yearly professional cleanings.** Some dogs and cats may require even more frequent cleanings, for example *2-4 cleanings per year may be needed to maintain good oral hygiene.*
- **Feed at least some hard food to provide a cleaning action.**
- **Have your pet's teeth examined every 6 months for tartar buildup!** Pets vary considerably in the amount of tartar that accumulates.
- **Rub teeth and gums with a prescribed pet toothpaste or cleaning product once daily.** A prescribed product especially formulated for pets is a necessity. We recommend **CET Toothpaste (available for both dogs and cats)** or **DentAcetic Wipes (a product that you rub on your pet's gums).** **Human toothpaste should not be used since it can be toxic if swallowed by the pet.** Also try our **CET Hextra Chews** for dogs or cats – these contain enzymes that help break down plaque before it becomes permanently attached to teeth.
- **Using our CET Oral rinse can be a easier and effectiove alternative or supplement to teeth brushing.** This rinse comes in a small bottle with a "straw" attached to the top that will apply a small amount of citrus-flavored rinse to your pet's teeth, disinfecting the mouth for a full 24 hours.



These recommendations will probably do more to prolong your pet's life and make it more enjoyable than anything else you can do! Proper dental care can add two years or more to the life of your pet!