



February is National Pet Dental Health Month

We are celebrating National Pet Dental Health Month this February with pictures of before and after dental cleanings along with stories, client education topics, and even coloring contests for children with prizes awarded for each age group.

This event will focus on preventive education and the importance of the Annual Exam and Periodontal Therapy to help maintain your pet's overall good health. Periodontal Therapy is a new term we're using that best describes all of the steps that go into managing your pet's oral health. We used to say your pet needs a dental. However, there is so much more that goes into this procedure – the term “dental” just doesn't work anymore.

You may ask yourself why we are so interested in maintaining your pet's health and recommending Periodontal Therapy. Here's why: pets with healthy teeth live longer and are less likely to experience any pain or discomfort from periodontal disease. By age 3, 70% of adult pets have developed early stages of gingivitis and/or periodontal disease. Untreated periodontal disease sends bacteria to the heart, liver, and kidneys, which ultimately leads to more serious problems. If you smell bad breath, there's a good chance an infection is already present in the mouth.

Periodontal Therapy means we'll use a safe anesthesia, perform a dental cleaning above and below the gum line, and then probe the pockets looking for possible problems or periodontal disease. Next, we'll take full mouth radiographs, just like your dentist does for you. After that, we'll perform any necessary periodontal treatments, oral surgery, or even extractions. We use a comprehensive approach to pain management. After we treat any periodontal disease, your pet should be feeling much better. They may even be more playful and energized to eat. Whew! That was a mouthful!

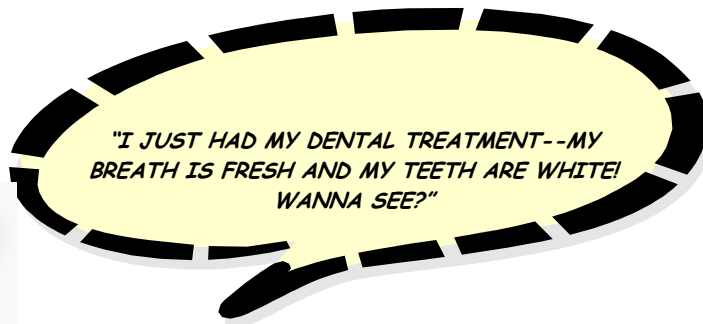
Here's what you can do to maintain your pet's good oral health:

- Bring your pet in each year for an annual exam. Your veterinarian will recommend Periodontal Therapy either yearly or every other year. Tell the doctor if your pet is losing weight, seems less interested in eating, takes longer to eat, or has really bad breath.
- If you can, plan ahead and budget for your pet's medical needs, especially for Periodontal Therapy. A dental cleaning and full mouth radiographs costs close to \$600. If your pet needs oral surgery or extractions, it could cost several hundreds more.
- Schedule the Periodontal Therapy as recommended. Even though your pet's dental cleaning and oral exam are similar to your dentist, we need to anesthetize your pet to safely and effectively clean below the gums and perform extractions as necessary.
- Follow a dental home care program like offering dental chews and treats, rinsing with a dental wash, and brushing your pet's teeth.
- We know brushing your pet's teeth sounds crazy; however, we're serious. By brushing your pet's teeth at home, you may be able to delay the onset of gingivitis or periodontal disease for several years AND save hundreds of dollars by avoiding extractions.

We would like to hear from you. Send us your tips (c/o Newsletter Tips) of how you were able to brush your pet's teeth and if your letter is chosen, we will feature your story on the bulletin board and publish it in the next newsletter.

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Return Service Requested



AS AN ADDED BONUS, WHEN YOU SCHEDULE YOUR PET'S ANNUAL EXAM, RECEIVE A \$50 COUPON GOOD TOWARD YOUR PET'S NEXT DENTAL TREATMENT.