**Pet Dental Health**

*Getting to the root of dental disease in dogs and cats*

Bad teeth and dental diseases can cause problems with the heart, kidney and liver! Here are some tips to help you and your pet enjoy a happy, healthy life together—shiny teeth included!

**FACTS**

- It only takes 48 hours for plaque (removable with toothbrush) to calcify and turn into tartar (which does not come off with brushing).

- Approximately 80% of dogs over the age of 3 years have gingivitis or periodontal disease.

- Chewing on ice cubes, rocks, and bones can break your pet’s teeth.

- The mouth is the 4th most common site for tumors in the body.

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**HOW TO PREVENT DENTAL DISEASE**

- Daily brushing may help to save teeth, prolong life, and decrease the number of anesthetic dental cleanings needed by your pet.

- If you can’t brush your pet’s teeth, consider special dental diets and treats to decrease plaque and tartar.

- Puppies and kittens benefit from a thorough oral exam to check for normal tooth eruption and normal bite.

- Use only toothpaste and toothbrushes made for dogs and cats.

- When introducing toothbrushing to your pet, take it slow and make it a positive experience for him.

**SYMPTOMS OF DENTAL PROBLEMS**

- Decreased appetite and chewing tendencies may be due to painful teeth.

- Foul smelling breath may indicate dental disease.

- Bleeding gums

- Yellow or brown stains on teeth

- Loose teeth or teeth loss

*See a regional veterinarian to address concerns about your pet’s dental health and teeth cleanings.*


*February is National Pet Dental Health Month*