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DENTAL DISEASE

Dental disease is a common problem in cats and dogs, and if left untreated, it can cause serious health problems. It is estimated that **nearly 80% of pets have some degree of periodontal disease by the age of three**, which is why dental exams and routine dental cleanings are essential. When left untreated, periodontal disease can lead to cardiac disease, kidney infection, liver infection, and more. Not to mention, it's uncomfortable! Imagine having a toothache for YEARS?!

What is Dental Disease?

Dental disease is a condition that affects the teeth and gums of cats and dogs. It is caused by the buildup of plaque and tartar on the teeth, which can lead to inflammation, infection, and tooth loss. Some common signs of dental disease include bad breath, yellow or brown buildup on the teeth, red or swollen gums, and difficulty eating or chewing. Cats can even suffer from **stomatitis**, where their mouth will ulcerate, and their teeth will begin to resorb under the gum line.

Preventing Dental Disease:

- **Brush their teeth regularly.** Brushing your pet's teeth regularly with a pet-specific toothbrush and toothpaste can help to remove plaque and prevent tartar buildup.
- **Provide dental chews or toys.** Providing dental chews or toys for your pet to chew on can help to remove plaque and tartar from their teeth. The most effective dental chew we've found for dogs is called "**Oravet.**" **They're available on Chewy!**
- **Schedule regular check-ups.** Regular check-ups with your veterinarian every 6 to 12 months can help to identify dental problems early on and prevent them from worsening. Your veterinarian can also let you know when it's time for a professional cleaning. While most pets usually have a bad tooth or progressive dental disease by the time they get a dental, it doesn't need to be that way! Just like we get our teeth cleaned to prevent cavities, they often need help in preventing tartar build up.

Treatment Options:

- **Antibiotics.** These are often needed if your pet has an infected tooth, or several. These will help calm down an infection and reduce pain, but only short term! If your pet needs antibiotics for their teeth, they also likely need a professional dental cleaning.
- **Dental Cleanings.** Proper dental cleanings require *full anesthesia*. You may find groomers or other facilities that advertise "anesthesia-free cleanings," but these procedures are neither safe nor truly effective. It's nearly impossible to thoroughly scale all of your pet's teeth if they are awake!
- **Extractions.** If any teeth are infected, have cavities, or are loose, extracting the affected teeth may be necessary. Believe us, veterinarians do not enjoy extracting teeth, and will only do so if it's your pets best interest.

At Midtown, each patient gets full pre-op lab work to make sure they can safely metabolize anesthesia. Then they have an IV placed so they can get IV fluids the entire procedure. While they are under, they get full mouth x-rays to evaluate the health of each tooth under the gum line, and then we scale and polish all of the teeth (just like your dentist does for you). If any teeth need to be extracted, they are extracted after a full cleaning and evaluation.

If you're looking to get your pet a root canal, or to save a damaged tooth, the best chance is to go to the dental specialist where those services are available. Unfortunately, a dental with a specialist, typically starts at \$3,000.

It is important to remember that dental disease is a serious health condition that can lead to other health problems if left untreated. If you have any other questions about dental cleanings at Midtown, head to our website, or shoot us an email!

STAGING OF DENTAL DISEASE IN PETS.

Stage 1, Gingivitis The gum (or gingiva) at the top of teeth is inflamed and swollen, and plaque covers the teeth. Treatment can reverse this condition.

Stage 2, Early Periodontitis The entire attached gum is inflamed and swollen. The pet's mouth is painful, and bad breath is noticeable. Professional treatment and home dental care can prevent this from becoming irreversible.

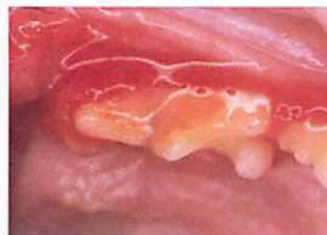
Stage 3, Moderate Periodontitis Infection and calculus are destroying the gum, now bright red and bleeding. The pet's mouth is sore, which can affect eating and behavior. Bad breath is consistent. Periodontitis has started and may be irreversible.

Stage 4, Advanced Periodontitis Chronic bacterial infection is destroying the gum, teeth and bone. Bacteria may be spreading in the bloodstream throughout the body, which can damage the kidneys, liver and heart.

Canine



Feline



BEFORE AND AFTER A DENTAL CLEANING



Before Dental Cleaning



After Dental Cleaning