

Dental Care

Words by Lisa Walters RVN of Chapel Vets

We all love to take care of our own teeth and are proud of our pearly white smiles but many of our pets' teeth are crying out for a clean up.

The soft pet food that we feed our animals can cause a build up of bacteria rich plaque on the surface of our pets' teeth, which can lead to inflammation of the gums. This in turn can directly affect the attachment between the tooth and the gum. When this attachment becomes weakened by inflammation the affected tooth can become loose and even fall out. Inflammation of the gums can also lead to abscess formation and concurrent blood borne infection of the kidneys, heart, lungs and liver.

Classic signs of oral problems in our pets are: Bad breath, excessive salivation, bleeding gums, reduced appetite or



chewing on one side of the mouth, pawing at the face and sometimes facial swelling.

There are many forms of preventative dental care available for our pets such as tooth brushes and dental chews but most of the time, animals need to be given a short general anesthetic and have the tartar removed from their teeth. The tartar removal is done with an ultrasonic scaler. The teeth are then polished with an electric polisher- like a dental hygienist would use.

Most vets have dental facilities on site so if you are concerned about your pets' oral health and would like a dental check up, pop them down to the surgery and we'll take a look and get to the bottom of the problem.



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