



Hello everybody! Here we are into February. I hope everyone enjoyed reading Jeneane's newsletter idea of feline heartworm. This month we are going to talk about dental disease, an idea from our vet tech, Brandi. February is National Dental Month so we hope you learn something about your pet's dental health.



Just imagine how you would feel if you didn't brush your teeth for 1 week; now imagine 1 year! Not a good thought is it? Now you know how your pet is feeling.

Here are some fun facts about dental disease:

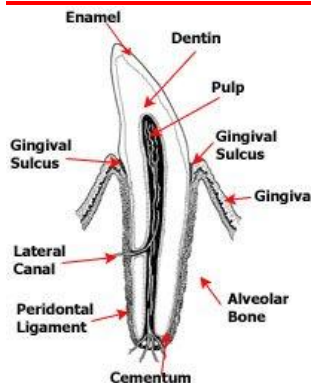
- ✓ The main cause of halitosis in dogs and cats is dental disease.
- ✓ Over 85% of pets over age 4 have some form of dental disease.
- ✓ Dental disease has been directly linked to liver, kidney and heart disease. That is why many times elements of the pre-anesthetic blood

work is elevated before the dental, and will then become normal within 1 month after the dental.



- ✓ Dental disease can cause gingivitis (inflamed gums), which is painful for your pet.
- ✓ Your pet can have abscessed or fractured teeth, which can also be painful.
- ✓ Brushing your pet's teeth regularly can increase their lifespan by 3 years.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:



- ✓ A yearly pet oral exam- this oral exam is part of your pet's routine yearly physical. The doctor should tell you how your pet's teeth are doing and if they recommend a dental prophylaxis (teeth cleaning) any time soon.
- ✓ Daily/Weekly brushing- it's not as hard as you might think and we would be happy to show you! We have toothbrushes that fit right on your finger and poultry flavored toothpaste. Yum!
- ✓ Dental Prophylaxis- this is a dental cleaning under anesthesia.

A dental prophylaxis can sound scary especially with anesthesia, but really it is a very routine procedure.

- ✓ Same-day service- you can drop off your pet in the morning and pick your pet up in the afternoon.
- ✓ Pre-anesthetic blood work-this service is done on your pet before it goes under anesthesia and included in the cost. This will alert us of any medical problems your pet may have that we need to address before the dental. Like I stated earlier, elements of your pet's blood work may be slightly elevated due to the infection caused by the bad teeth. If this is the case, we like to repeat the blood work 1 month later to make sure the blood values have gone back to normal.
- ✓ Oral exam- a thorough mouth exam is given under anesthesia. We evaluate the severity of your pet's periodontal disease and look for fractured teeth, oral tumors, bite abnormalities or other potential problems.
- ✓ Scaling-calculus and tartar- these infectious bacteria are both removed both above and below the gum line.
- ✓ Polishing-microscopic scratches- small hairline scratches are polished out of the enamel, giving teeth a smoother surface and helping to prevent calculus from adhering to the teeth when brushed regularly.
- ✓ Extractions- this can be traumatic more so for the owner than the pet. We can assure you that we only extract teeth that are in need of removing. If the tooth has a cavity, is broken, or is no longer held firmly in place by surrounding bone, it is painful to your pet and needs extracted. If we do extract teeth, we give your pet pain medication so they do not experience any discomfort. Dogs have 32 teeth and cats have 24, so your pet will not miss the teeth and will still be able to eat normally.
- ✓ Antibiotics- if your pet has severe dental disease it will receive an antibiotic injection for the infection, or your pet will be placed on oral antibiotics either before or after the dental.
- ✓ Cost- Cat dentals run about \$200. Dog dentals run about \$225-\$250, depending on weight. These prices include pre-anesthetic blood work and a thorough mouth exam. Extractions are extra and run about \$5 per tooth unless it's a major extraction, and we will let you know in advance if that is going to be the case. Repeat blood work if necessary is extra.

Here are some before and after pictures to convince you to have your pet's dental cleaning:

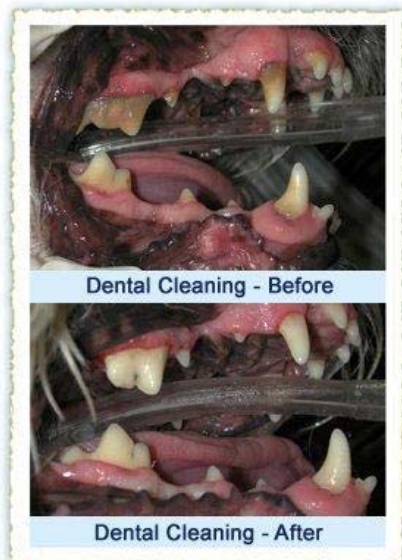
### **FELINE:**



Cat's teeth - note tartar around teeth

Same cat's teeth after dental cleaning

### **CANINE:**



Dental Cleaning - Before

Dental Cleaning - After

I know many of you are concerned about putting your pet under anesthesia. I want to assure you that we take your pet's health into consideration and only use the safest anesthesia to perform the dental.

### **Dr. Tidbit by Dr. Kelley Owen:**

Preventing dental disease is one the best things we can do for our pets. Brushing a dog or cat's teeth daily or 2-3 times a week can help prevent kidney, liver and heart disease as well as dental infection. It is best to start by putting your fingers in your pet's mouth and giving them a treat or petting them. Next, try feeding them some of the special toothpaste from your finger. When your pet is comfortable with licking toothpaste off your hand, put some on a toothbrush and allow your pet to lick the toothpaste off the

brush. Once your pet has mastered this, you can start to massage along the upper and lower gum lines with a toothbrush, finger brush or gauze sponge. You are now brushing your pet's teeth and helping insure a long healthy life!

### **Adoptions:**

I am happy to report that Nellie, our little calico kitten featured last month, got adopted. I would like to thank Megan Edwards for opening her home to our little girl. This month we have a new calico cat looking for a home. She is about 1 year old and is very affectionate. She is a little shy around dogs but we are trying to break her of that ☺ She is very friendly to humans though! She has been felv/fiv tested, vaccinated, de wormed and spayed. This month we also have a dog for adoption. Ivan is a male/neutered 2 year old husky. He was rescued from Ritchie County after a fire burnt down their animal shelter. He has a real good disposition and likes other dogs and cats. He has had a thorough health check, vaccinated, heartworm tested and he is ready to go into his new home.

### **Upcoming Events:**

I am very happy to report that we are hosting another pet photography day! We are going to have this day on Saturday March 6<sup>th</sup> between 12:40 and 7:00. Pictures are by appointment so if you are interested please give us a call and we can set up a time for you and your pet! We had a lot of fun doing this last time and the pictures turned out great. The sitting fee is \$15 and that includes a free 8x10. All proceeds go towards C.A.N.S. our spay/neuter aluminum can recycling program.

Our online store is now open! It is available through your pet portal. So if the weather gets bad and you can't come see us, you now can order your supplies on line! If you have any problems or questions about your pet portal please let us know! If you need a pet portal go to [www.hillcrestveterinaryclinic.com](http://www.hillcrestveterinaryclinic.com) and sign up today!

## Employee Spotlight:



Brandi's dog "Leo"

This month we are featuring our veterinary technician, Brandi.

My name is Brandi and I have been a technician for almost 10 years. I share my life with my dog, Leo, who is 4 1/2 years old. I moved to Morgantown after I spent 10 years in New England. Leo and I have lived here for 1 year and we love it.

**That is all we have for this month's newsletter. If you have any questions about your pet's dental health or would like to schedule a dental screening or dental cleaning please feel free to call us!**