

Below are photos of two cats and two dogs who presented to you for routine examinations. They are otherwise healthy and each had dental x-rays and a dental cleaning over a year ago. Which patients would you recommend be scheduled for full mouth dental radiographs and a dental cleaning as soon as possible?



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Hopefully your answer was all four of them! For so long in veterinary medicine we have waited until there is disease present to recommend dentistry. When we relate dentistry in our patients to human dentistry, people seem to understand the importance of preventative care. We would (hopefully) not wait until we have calculus, gingivitis, periodontal disease or terrible breath before deciding it is finally time to go to the dentist. Our patients are no different. By preconditioning new puppy and kitten owners to expect the first dental cleaning at 1 year old and at least every year thereafter, they will expect and prepare for preventative dentistry. This type of dental care is faster, easier for our patients and less costly - everybody wins! The first step to communicating the value of preventative dental care to your patients is truly believing it and making sure your staff does too. Once that happens and your

clients are properly educated about dentistry, you will be surprised at how much more compliant your clients will be with your recommendations.