

# ORAL MASSES



- An oral mass is an overgrowth of tissue that can be associated with the gum tissue, the tooth, the tongue, the cheeks, the roof of the mouth and/or the lips.
- The oral cavity is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common site for tumors. Often times, these tumors or masses are not found until they are quite large (if a pet doesn't have a routine thorough oral exam and if an owner is not routinely brushing or evaluating the oral cavity---these masses can "sneak" up on you). Until further diagnostics are performed (oral exam with dental x-rays and biopsy of the mass) it cannot be determined if the mass is benign or cancerous. When patients present with an oral mass, all differentials and treatment options are discussed. If the mass is large or we need more information before treatment, a biopsy may be taken to find out exactly what type of mass we are dealing with in order to treat appropriately. If the mass is smaller, then it may be recommended to remove it completely and then perform the biopsy to find out what the mass is. Each case and each patient is different and an individualized treatment plan is made for your pet at the time of the consultation.
- **Small Oral Mass of the Mandible (lower jaw):**



Oral mass of the right lower canine  
(side view)



Oral mass of the right lower canine  
(looking down over mass)



After oral mass removal

- If a patient presents for a suspected cancerous mass—we will recommend a thorough workup including thoracic (chest) x-rays to make sure that there is no evidence that the suspected cancer has spread and to make sure there are no increased risks for anesthesia for that patient.
- Sometimes these surgeries result in taking a large part of the upper or lower jaw to remove the mass and obtain clean margins (free of cancer cells). After the biopsy results are returned, depending on the type of mass we may recommend follow up with an oncologist

**Large Oral Mass of the left Maxilla (upper jaw):**



**Side View**



**Straight on view**



**Post-operative appearance**