

PERIODONTAL DISEASE

The Carolinas Animal Hospital
And Dental Clinic



PERIODONTAL DISEASE is the most common disease affecting companion animals. In fact, 85% of dogs and cats over 3 years have periodontal disease. Unfortunately, our pets cannot communicate the **PAIN** and **INFECTION** they are experiencing. Even in the latest stages of periodontal disease, most pets will still eat because of their survival instinct.

Plaque is the invisible film we brush off of our own teeth every day. This film is made up of bacteria and food particles and leads to inflammation of the gums (**GINGIVITIS**) and bad breath (**HALITOSIS**). When mixed with minerals in the drinking water, a cement-like brown substance (**CALCULUS**) begins to develop on the teeth, causing more gum inflammation and eventually bone loss. Most people believe that "doggie breath" is normal, but in fact it is one of the earliest signs of periodontal disease. Besides bone and tooth loss, the most serious side effect of **PERIODONTAL DISEASE** is the spread of bacteria to the organs. Every time your pet chews, bacteria are injected directly into the bloodstream, **DAMAGING THE KIDNEYS, LIVER, HEART AND OTHER VITAL ORGANS**. Luckily, we have the technology to assess the amount of disease with digital dental x-rays, and **STOP** the progression of periodontal disease with a complete dental cleaning and medications!



BEFORE



AFTER

At The Carolinas Animal Hospital and Dental Clinic, we take every precaution when we anesthetize your pet for a thorough dental cleaning. While many people are concerned about the risks of anesthetizing their beloved pets, **the risk of continued dental disease is significantly greater than the risk of your pet suffering complications from anesthesia.** We recommend checking blood and urine tests in our patients prior to anesthesia to be sure their organs are functioning properly. An intravenous catheter is placed in all patients so we can administer IV fluids, which helps your pet process the anesthetic and recover more quickly. We use only state of the art equipment, and are able to continuously monitor your pet's *heart rate, respiration rate, blood pressure, lung carbon dioxide level, blood oxygen level, and body temperature.* We also pre-oxygenate all of our patients to maximize the oxygen in their tissues prior to anesthesia. After most dental cleaning procedures we typically perform a therapeutic laser treatment to assist with healing of the oral tissues.

The average cat or dog should have their teeth cleaned **once each year** beginning when they are 10-12 months of age. This includes examining each tooth individually, ultrasonically scaling and polishing the teeth, using hand instruments to clean beneath the gums, and then applying a sealant. Common signs of dental disease to look for in your pets include:

- **BAD BREATH**
- **SWOLLEN OR BLEEDING GUMS**
- **PRESENCE OF BLOOD ON CHEW TOYS**
- **BROWN OR BLACK HARD ACCUMULATION ON THE TEETH**
- **RELUCTANCE TO CHEW HARD OBJECTS**
- **BROKEN TEETH**

Our **goal** is for your pets to have their teeth cleaned **BEFORE** the above signs develop. For the majority of dogs and cats, cleaning their teeth annually and providing good dental home care is the key to living a long, healthy life! For more information and to read about "**KALLIE'S BIG DAY AT THE DENTIST,**" which pictorially walks you through every step of a day in the life of one of our dental patients, please visit www.carolinasanimalhospital.com.