



SEADOWN

VETERINARY GROUP



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Dental Attention

Periodontal disease (disease of the teeth and associated structures) is a common problem in veterinary practice. Owners are often unaware that their animals have dental problems, until signs such as bad breath, drooling and difficulty eating become apparent – by which time dental disease may be advanced.

The most common trigger for dental disease is accumulation of plaque and tartar on the teeth, causing trapping of bacteria and inflammation of the gums (gingivitis). If this progresses, pockets form underneath the gum line, allowing bacteria to breed and the tooth attachments to break down. Early removal of plaque and tartar is advisable to prevent disease progression.

Another condition particular to cats is Feline Odontoclastic Resorptive Lesions (FORLs), otherwise known as 'neck lesions'. These are little areas of decay in the tooth enamel, which when deep enough cause the nerves within the tooth to become exposed, which can be very painful. The only treatment is removal of the tooth.

The best way to help prevent your pet from developing dental disease is to maintain good oral hygiene. The most effective way of doing this is daily brushing. There are many toothpastes and gels available for animals – never use human toothpastes as these may cause problems if swallowed. A few more tips for maintaining a healthy mouth:

- dry food is better for your animal's teeth
- feeding things like dental chews and carrots can help scrape off plaque
- if your pet will not tolerate brushing, a small amount of enzymatic toothpaste/gel in the mouth can still help
- see your vet for further details on oral hygiene preparations



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