

February is National Dental Month

How Common is Pet Dental Disease?

Three out of four dogs over three years old have dental disease. Small dogs with crowded mouths are prone to tartar accumulation while larger dogs often have dental disease that begins from a cracked or fractured tooth caused by aggressive chewing.

What are the Risks Associated with Dental Disease?

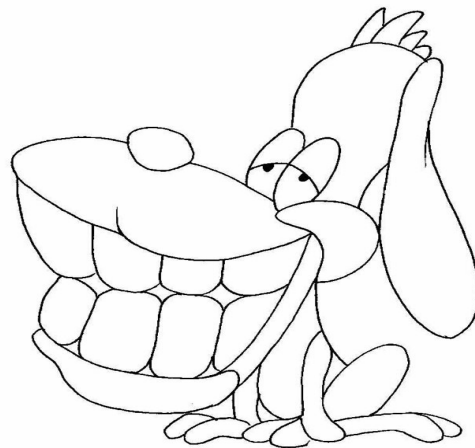
Tartar and plaque can trap bacteria leading to gum line irritation (gingivitis) and cause destruction of the gums and underlying tooth roots; if left unchecked this can lead to bone recession as well. In addition to damaging oral health infection in the mouth can act as a source of constant bacterial shedding into the blood stream. This contaminated blood being pumped through the body can cause severe damage to heart valves as well as the liver and kidneys.

Does my Pet have Dental Disease?

If you are examining your pet at home two things to look for are cherry red colored gums indicating gingivitis or bad smelling breath indicating bacterial infection. Pets are very stoic and hide oral pain very well. Many people who haven't noticed their pet experiencing any oral pain reported a happier pet after a dental cleaning because of the removal of the pain that their pet had been living with. A dental exam by a veterinarian to look for loose or fractured teeth, gingivitis, or excessive tartar and plaque build up is essential in diagnosing dental disease.

What Can I do?

Home care is one of the best ways to preserve oral health. Regular brushing is one of the best ways to prevent tartar and plaque build up. If you are unable to brush your pet's teeth there are many available chew toys, dental diets and treats, as well as water additives to limit dental disease. Even with the best home care dental disease may occur, if it is present the veterinarian may recommend a dental cleaning procedure to remove all tartar and extract any diseased teeth.



In recognition of National Dental Month the Chippewa Veterinary Clinic is offering 15% off dental procedures during the month of February.