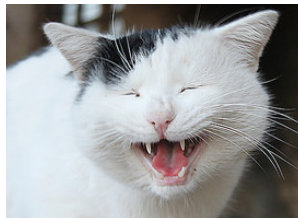
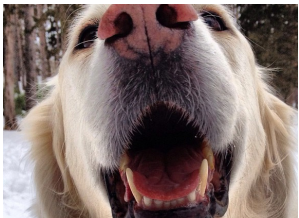


Smile! It's Pet Dental Health Month...

Pet Dental Health Month is February and a great time to raise awareness of the importance of pet oral wellness. Dental disease in pets is similar to what happens with people, except that we usually take care of our smiles several times a day, while your pet does not. Just think of how your mouth would feel, look, taste and smell if you never brushed your teeth. Now think about your dog or cat and realize they need dental care as much as you do!

To help kick-off Pet Dental Health Month, here is an overview of what causes dental disease, its symptoms and how you can help manage your pet's oral health.



Causes of Dental Disease

- Bacteria in the mouth, combined with saliva and food debris, forms plaque
- Layers of plaque accumulate and dental tartar is created
- Layers of plaque combine with bacteria on top of tartar, results in calculus
- Tartar and calculus are hard, and must be scraped off or else they trap bacteria in and under the gumline, leading to irritated gums and then periodontal disease

What Can Happen

- Bad breath
- Excessive salivation
- Refusing to eat
- Rubbing or pawing at the face
- Loose or broken teeth
- Red, inflamed gums
- Rotten teeth that must be extracted
- Brown debris or yellow buildup on the teeth
- Eventually, bacterial infection can spread from the mouth to the heart, kidneys, and liver

Prevention

According to the American Veterinary Dental Society, almost 85% of cats and dogs have periodontal disease by age four, but you can help prevent this with:

- Starting early in your pet's life with oral health care instead of waiting for dental disease to develop
- Annual dental exams and cleanings
- Give them special dental treats that help brush away tartar and calculus – ask us to recommend a few
- Get further involved by brushing their teeth at home – we can show you how

Celebrate Pet Dental Health Month today by having your pet's mouth checked!

Take A Peek At Gum Disease

Gently lift your pets' lip and pull back toward their cheek. Does their breath smell bad? Do you see red or puffy gums, brown debris (dental tartar) or yellow build-up (calculus) on the teeth? These are all signs that your pet likely has dental disease and needs an oral examination.