

FOCUS

O N P E T H E A L T H

IS YOUR PET PROTECTED? DID YOU KNOW PET DENTAL DISEASE IS CALLED THE “SILENT KILLER OF PETS?”

We all know that fresh breath and a healthy smile are important to us. But what about our pets? Are you doing your part to support your pet's dental health? It's not just the veterinarian's job, maintaining proper dental care is an important at home routine that will support your pet's overall wellness.

October is National Pet Wellness Month and it's the perfect time to focus on educating yourself and other pet lovers about the importance of preventive pet dental health care.

5 reasons to promote pet dental health

1. Pets with healthy smiles may live longer

Dental disease is the No. 1 health issue affecting dogs and cats. Neglecting your pet's dental health can cause gingivitis, periodontal disease, loss of teeth a number of issues. An alarming 80 percent of dogs and 70 percent of cats show signs of periodontal disease by age three. Called the “Silent Killer of Pets,” this condition can cause bacteria to enter the bloodstream and infect the heart, liver, and kidneys — shortening your pet's life by two to five years.

2. Pets with fresh breath get more lovin'

What greater joy exists than a pet so happy to see you that they nearly bowl you over in excitement? We love to closely interact with our pets, snuggling and hugging them. It's such an important part of the relationship. Sadly, the experience becomes somewhat less joyous when your pet is stricken with a horrible case of bad breath. A dog or cat with bad breath can cause anyone to turn the other way in an attempt to avoid the sometimes stinky pet breath.

3. Dental disease causes your pet unnecessary pain

Unfortunately, quite a bit of damage caused by dental disease can occur before you notice anything. Pets with early gum disease generally don't show any signs at all, except for a little bad breath. As the problem progresses, the gums become very

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red and sore, and your pet may not want to chew hard food. You might see smears of blood on your pet's chew toys. Pets often rub their mouths with their paws or against other surfaces. If you've ever experienced an excruciating toothache, you have a good idea of what pets with dental disease are going through.

4. Tooth loss can result in nutritional deficiencies

By the time your pet's dental problem reaches a serious stage known as periodontal disease, the infection has spread deep into the teeth and roots, which ultimately leads to the loss of infected teeth. This can result in malnutrition due to your pet's inability to eat properly. Some deficiencies don't take very long to become apparent, while others develop over a long time before the critical state of health becomes obvious.

5. It can save you hundreds in professional teeth cleanings

The average claim amount submitted for teeth cleaning by Veterinary Pet Insurance policyholders is \$292 and can range anywhere from \$70 to \$350, depending on the difficulty of the job. The costs quickly escalate as the build-up of plaque and tartar on the teeth and under the gumline worsens. Pet owners and veterinarians alike report that pets whose owners provide routine home dental care pay far less in professional cleanings.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Brushing is the gold standard for keeping your pet's teeth free of tartar, their mouth healthy and their breath fresh. Yet fewer than one out of 20 pet owners are willing or able to brush their pet's teeth on a regular basis. Promoting your pet's overall health starts with a healthy smile! Oxyfresh makes it simple. We care about your pets. That's why we combine the best ingredients nature has to offer with safe science to create the highest quality formulas you'll find anywhere to promote optimum dental health for your pet. You'll love the results!

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