



Dental Disease

Dental disease is the most common problem our pets face. The most prevalent type of dental disease is plaque or dental tartar. Dental calculus (tartar) is composed of various mineral salts, organic material and food particles. In the early stages of accumulation, the material is soft (plaque), but it later hardens and adheres to the teeth. Continual accumulation causes inflammation of the gums and eventual recession of the gums and loose teeth. The breath becomes very odorous and the mouth becomes a dangerous source of infection.

Untreated tooth and gum disease may allow bacteria to enter the bloodstream and cause damage to the valves of the heart. Healthy gums are pink and adhere tightly to teeth that are white and smooth. Diseased gums are thickened, red, and may bleed easily, while the teeth may appear rough and brown in color.

Here are some more signs of dental disease:

1. Your pet's teeth are discolored.
2. Your pet's mouth is sensitive and he/she will not allow you to look at the teeth.
3. Your pet has difficulty eating (may evidence dental pain)
4. Bad breath is a noticeable problem.
5. Blood or infection has been seen coming from the mouth (or on the bedding).

The main treatment for dental disease is to scale and polish the pet's teeth. This is done under a general anesthetic. Scaling will remove calculus at and below the gum line, while polishing will smooth the tooth surface to reduce plaque and tartar buildup.