

IMPORTANCE OF DENTAL CARE

One of the most common misconceptions that we encounter among our clients is that dental care is a cosmetic issue. In fact, bad teeth are one of the most ominous conditions that we can discover on an annual exam, because dental disease is the harbinger of so many other serious ailments.

Did You Know:

- Gum disease shortens life expectancy in both animals and humans
- Gum disease is linked to heart disease
- Gum disease is linked to kidney disease
- Gum disease is linked to diabetes

So, when we see the reddening of the gums which signifies the dreaded gum disease known as "gingivitis", we don't just see red gums - we see heart disease, renal problems, and diabetes. We want to get rid of that as fast as we can.

Once the pet in question has developed those diseases, it becomes a terrible risk. Do we put a sick patient through anesthetic to prevent the patient from getting sicker? Often we end up having to leave the teeth out of fear that the pet might not survive anesthetic, even though we know the tooth disease is slowly killing our patient.

On top of the general health risks of dental disease, bad teeth become a quality of life issue. Bad teeth can cause:

- Chronic pain
- Abscesses
- Bone infection
- Bone loss in the jaw

We have seen pets with dental abscesses so severe that owners have chosen to euthanize the pet.

Many owners are unaware that their pets are suffering from mouth pain. Dogs and cats don't show signs of pain, such as avoiding food or pawing at their mouths, until the infection is extremely severe.

It is only after we clean under the gums and extract rotten teeth that we get clients telling us, "it's like Fluffy got five years younger!"

So lift up your pet's lips today and take a look at those teeth and gums. It may be time for a dentistry, because good teeth are a vital investment in the longevity and happiness of your pet.

