

Periodontics

Treatment of periodontal disease

Periodontal disease affects over 80% of dogs and 70% of cats over 3 years of age.

Gingivitis is inflammation of the gingival tissue only. Gingivitis is a reversible condition.

Periodontal disease is inflammation of the structures that support the tooth: the gingival tissue (gum tissue), the periodontal ligament which holds the tooth in its boney socket, the cementum which is the outer layer of the tooth root, and the alveolus which is the bone that comprises the tooth socket. Periodontitis involves loss of bone support around the tooth and is an irreversible. Our goal for the treatment of periodontitis is control of the disease. We cannot cure periodontitis once it is established.

What causes periodontal disease? Plaque accumulates on your pet's teeth within hours of professional teeth cleaning. With time the plaque mineralizes and becomes calculus (the brown hard material on your pet's teeth). Contained within the plaque and calculus are bacteria which invade the space under the gumline and cause destruction of the tissues that support the tooth leading to periodontal disease. PREVENTION of periodontal disease is INTEGRAL to your pet's overall health and longevity!



Stage 4 periodontal disease in a dog



Stage 4 periodontal disease in a cat

Periodontal Therapy (tooth scaling and polishing)

Periodontal therapy involves the removal of tooth deposits above and below the gumline. The goal of periodontal therapy is to minimize pocket depth and attachment loss. All of the teeth are carefully examined visually and with a periodontal probe. Any abnormal pockets or other visible pathology require intraoral radiographs for full evaluation.

Root planing

Pocket depths greater than 3 mm in a dog and greater than 0.5 -1 mm in a cat require treatment. Those treatments may include closed root planing, subgingival curettage, open root planing, and /or placement of a perioceutic within the pocket.

Guided tissue regeneration and bone grafting

Caused by periodontal disease, an infrabony pocket is an abnormal space (vertical bone loss) between the tooth root and the surrounding alveolus (tooth socket). Infrabony pockets commonly occur on the palatal (inside) of the upper canine tooth and may be treated with a bone graft. This allows the pocket to 'heal' and the bone and periodontal ligament to reattach to the tooth.

