



internal medicine • surgery • dermatology • radiology, ultrasound & CT scan • cardiology • critical care

### DENTAL EXAM

Annual dental exams are extremely important for your pet's health. Some signs that your pet may have a dental problem can include bad breath, trouble chewing or not eating, and visible evidence of plaque, tartar or inflamed gums. Oral problems can lead to serious health concerns if left untreated.

dental cleanings at this stage to prevent the disease from progressing. Grade 2 disease is usually not associated with the risk of tooth loss.



### GRADES OF PERIODONTAL DISEASE

#### Grade 1

This is the mildest stage of dental disease. Usually a thin layer of plaque and tartar is present on the molars. Halitosis may or may not be present. A dental procedure is usually not necessary at this stage. If gingivitis (red or inflamed gums) is present, a dental procedure may be recommended.

#### Grade 3

This stage is usually considered severe dental disease. Plaque and tartar build up is profound, usually yellow or brown in color. Severe halitosis and



#### Grade 2

Thicker layers of plaque and tartar are present on most of the teeth. Halitosis and gingivitis can be more profound in this stage. It is important to start

Dental Procedure



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24-hour Emergency Hospital

# Dental Procedure

gingivitis is present. Cavities and root infections can be seen with evidence of alveolar bone loss around the teeth. If the infection or bone loss is severe enough around a tooth, it may need to be extracted.

## Grade 4

This is the most severe stage of dental disease. The severity of infection can stress the immune system and lead to kidney and heart problems. Some pets become lethargic and may stop eating. Very severe and painful gingivitis, severe halitosis, heavy plaque and tartar build up are present. The gums can be bright red or purple, swollen and inflamed, and in most cases bleeding. Pus can often be found around the tooth root. The crowns of the teeth are completely covered with brown, green or black tartar. Due to profound infection, many teeth are loose and falling out, have cavities, root infections and abscesses. A dental procedure is highly recommended where these teeth are extracted. This helps prevent any further infection and will also relieve some of the severe pain.



## DENTAL PROCEDURE

Following the dental exam, your veterinarian may recommend that your pet be anesthetized to perform a thorough dental cleaning and treat any problems that may not have been detected during the exam. The complexities of the dental procedures vary on the condition of the patients teeth. Your veterinarian will dis-

cuss with you in detail what needs to be done during your pet's dentistry. Listed below are services that are standard in every dental procedure performed at Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital.

- The safest general anesthetic available is used throughout the dental procedure.
- EKG, blood pressure, and respiration are monitored throughout the anesthesia.
- Digital X-rays are taken of the entire mouth before the dental cleaning begins. They provide a more in-depth look under the gum line and can show cavities and infected tooth roots that may otherwise be missed.
- If diseased teeth need to be removed, pain medication is administered before, during and after the procedure to assist in your pet's recovery.
- An antibiotic is administered to prevent the spread of infection from the mouth to other parts of the body.
- Individualized sterilized instrument packs are used for each dental procedure.
- Ultrasonic scaling and fluoride polishing to clean the teeth.
- Fluids are administered through an intravenous catheter to maintain blood pressure.
- Dental records are maintained for accuracy and for follow-up visits.

To help your pet maintain good oral health our veterinarians recommend that dogs and cats have a full dental procedure at least every other year once they are four years old. This is a safe procedure and can help future health problems and allow early detection.

Regular dental procedures throughout your pet's life can help to prevent lost teeth and gum disease, two major oral problems in most older dogs and cats. Prevention is the key to keeping your pet living a long, healthy life with your family.