

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

February, 2011

Welcome

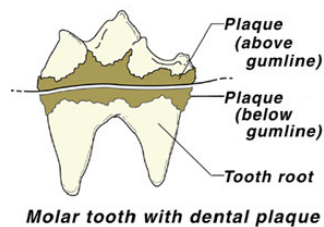
Each February we celebrate Dental Health Month. This year we'll discuss dental health but we are focusing specifically on showing examples of our own patients. We hope the real-life photos will demonstrate the difference a dental cleaning can make aesthetically, and of course we'll mention how a cleaning helps a pet's internal health. Our featured employee for the month of February is Darlene, our office manager. And don't forget to check out our featured TAILS pets! But first we'll address the top dental-health related questions that we are asked during a visit (on a daily basis). As always, if you have any questions, contact us via email, phone, or just stop by.

Common Questions Asked at the Vet: How Do I Know When to Get My Pet's Teeth Cleaned?

The simplest answer to this question is to have your pet's teeth cleaned at least annually. As always we recommend brushing your pet's teeth once daily (for both dogs and cats). Even if you are able to stick to a once-daily regimen of brushing, bits of plaque will still build up on the surfaces of the teeth. Once there, the only way to thoroughly remove plaque is to have it scaled and polished at the vet's office.

Why Does My Pet Have Bad Breath?

We often hear clients comment that their pets have "bad breath." Contrary to popular opinion, this is not normal. Imagine if you didn't brush your teeth regularly or visit the dentist at least once a year. Your "owner" (or spouse) might remark about it



occasionally, too. 😊 Gingivitis is a leading cause of bad breath in companion animals. This disease starts

in the gumline with bacteria lodging in the soft tissue surrounding the teeth. If the bacteria are not removed (via brushing) it will continue to multiply, causing redness and inflammation in the gums. Eventually gingivitis can lead to tooth loss through infections in the structures holding the teeth in place. Needless to say, this is a very painful process. Also, these bacteria from the infections get into the body via the bloodstream and go to the liver, heart and kidneys. They can cause organ damage and disease, so your pet's total wellbeing depends on having healthy teeth.

I Can't Afford a Dental Cleaning at This Time. What Can I Do to Help My Pet Until I Can Bring Him/Her In?

With the current economy causing most everyone to pinch pennies, it's no wonder dental health for dogs and cats often get put off "until I can manage it." Unfortunately, once the doctor tells you your pet needs a dental cleaning, there is not much that can be



done to correct the

problem. But there are steps you can take to *prevent* it from occurring in the first place. Of course the number one defense against plaque and gingivitis is brushing. Once daily is the magic number. You can find water additives both at the vet's office and sometimes in the pet store. Pet oral hygiene rinses help kill bacteria in the mouth each time they are used. There are also diets available that are specially formulated to help scrape the teeth and stimulate the gums. Crunchy treats (think raw veggies) can be a good way to keep your pet's teeth



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from getting worse, and you can look for toys made to massage the gums to promote oral health as well. One more tip: if you simply cannot brush, bring home enzymatic pet toothpaste alone. Just getting it on the teeth will help to some degree.

How Do I Brush My Pet's Teeth Anyway?

The last question we are asked when an appointment turns to dental hygiene is how to brush a pet's teeth. The process of training a pet to accept (and even like) having its teeth brushed may take a few months, but it is well worth the time. We recommend starting out by introducing the toothpaste as a treat. Ask your dog to sit, or place your cat comfortably on your lap. Offer a pea-sized bit of toothpaste and allow the pet to lick it off your finger. Once the routine of holding still and receiving a toothpaste treat is established, you can move to placing the toothpaste on the pet's teeth. Still using your finger, gently lift the lip and swipe the teeth with the toothpaste, then allow your pet to lick it off and enjoy the treat. When your pet is comfortable with this new routine, start rubbing its teeth and gums for a few seconds each time you offer the treat. At this point you may want to introduce a



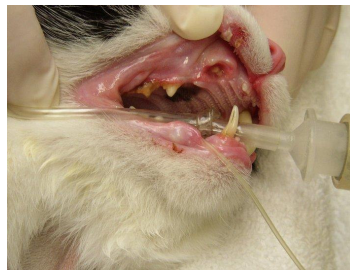
soft toothbrush. You can use a pet toothbrush or an infant toothbrush. Keep your brushing sessions short at first; a few seconds at most. Gradually you may build up to one to two minutes of brushing time. Remember to brush once each day to help keep your pet its healthiest.

finger brush to help your pet get used to the feel of bristles. As your dog or cat gets more used to the feeling of having its teeth brushed, try graduating him or her to a

Dental Health Awareness Month: Before and After Pictures

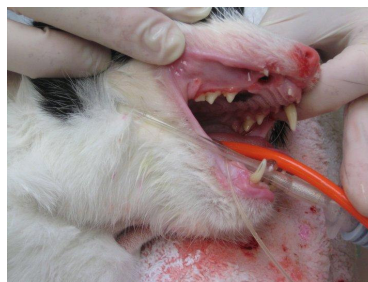
Now let's see the pictures! To protect our patients' and clients' we do not include information that could be used to identify the pet pictured.

This first picture is of a cat's mouth. Notice the missing canine tooth? We did not



remove that tooth--it fell out after developing a root abscess. This does not happen often because the canine teeth

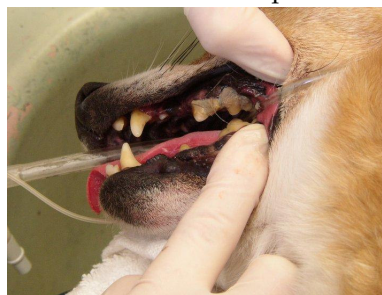
have the longest roots (and best anchoring in the jaw) of all the teeth.



This is the same cat after we flushed the cavity left by the canine tooth and cleaned the rest of

the teeth. You can see the gums already look much healthier.

This picture is of a medium-sized dog we saw to evaluate if a premolar needed to be



extracted. Notice the extreme amount of tartar build-up on all the teeth.

The same dog's teeth after cleaning. The tartar covered up severe gum recession over

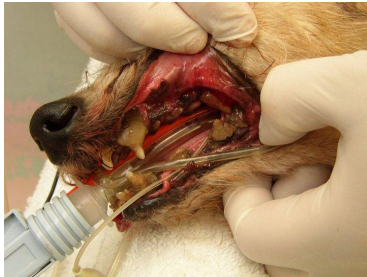
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the pre-molar. The tooth did not need to be extracted in this case as it was still anchored securely, despite the portion of the tooth root visible in the picture. The owner will have to watch those teeth carefully though and begin brushing daily.



This dog had severe dental problems. The tartar on the teeth blocked any view of the gumline, but the redness and inflammation of gingivitis was apparent throughout the



soft tissue. Teeth had become so encrusted that the gums bled readily and required quite a few

extractions. The owners had previously been reluctant to schedule a dental cleaning due to the inherent risks of using anesthesia, but the dog developed bleeding from the nostrils from deep tooth root abscesses. This particular cleaning was performed as an emergency procedure.

The same dog after having most of the teeth in its upper jaw and



several in the lower jaw extracted. The gum tissue was so frail Dr Cechner had to suture

it to provide a framework for healing. Yes, this dog will be able to eat just fine with only a few teeth left.

These last few pictures show what we'd like to see when a patient is brought in for a dental cleaning. These teeth have some tartar but are not excessively covered, nor



are they affected by gingivitis to a painful degree. The first picture shows teeth that have

just a little bit of tartar build-up. This dog was here to have a mass removed and we cleaned her teeth at the same time just to get it done. The second picture shows teeth that have more tartar and a slight degree of gingivitis, but the overall condition of the mouth was not nearly as bad as many of our dental patients'.



These teeth show how most of our patients' teeth *should* look when they come in for a dental prophylaxis.

Dental hygiene needs to be a part of *everyday* pet care. The above examples are just a few of the cases we've seen recently. Every day we examine pets that we know need dental prophylaxis cleanings. If your pet is one of those, consider having the procedure done this February. Dental disease is a serious issue that pet owners often overlook. But complications from dental issues can affect your pet's overall health. See our past February newsletters on our website for information on the effects of uncontrolled tartar build up and gingivitis.

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Featured Employee: Darlene



Meet Darlene, our office manager. Darlene started here almost 6 years ago as a technician but has managed the “behind the scenes” side of the clinic for the last three years. She orders all the medicines we use as well as the foods we carry,

treats, and medical supplies. Darlene usually works in the back, although she often acts as a “go-fer” and makes weekly trips to the printers, the grocery store, and other sundry places to keep the clinic running smoothly. She has lots of practice in management, too. She used to work at another clinic as a technician, but prior to that she managed a fence-and-deck company and helped run a business with her husband. Darlene is rather like a mother figure here at EAH. She’s always there to help, jumping in to hold a squirmy dog, helping to calm a skittish cat, listening to a client’s story or hearing about an employee’s bad day. She cares for her three dogs and three cats when she’s not here caring for our patients. Sera is a shepherd mix that was rescued from an abandoned apartment. Bruno is a Chihuahua Darlene brought home from Springfield. Stinky is a Chihuahua mix that was rescued right here at EAH. Her cats are Strawberry, Cleo and Sweet Pea, and all were rescues as well. Darlene sometimes brings one of her dogs to the clinic just to “hang out.” But whether she’s holding a patient for a vaccine or ordering supplies, we’re glad Darlene’s a member of the Elburn Animal Hospital family!



TAILS Featured Pets:

This month the pets from TAILS Humane Society include several cats and dogs, and also a bunny!

TAILS is located on Barber Greene Road in DeKalb, and often has pets available other than dogs and cats. They even have mice up for adoption! Please consider a shelter pet the next time you add a new family member.



Pumpkin

What a sweetie! She’s a 2-year old Rat Terrier/Beagle mix, a small dog. She seeks attention right away and loves people.

Pumpkin will gently jump into your lap for some good warm cuddles. She loves belly rubs, too! This intelligent little girl is looking for a loving home with people who know how to treat her right. She would love to take obedience classes and make your bond even stronger. She aims to please. Is she your Forever Friend?

Juno

She strikes a regal pose for you here. It doesn’t show in this photo, but she has blue eyes. Juno is a small, three year old cat who was a stray. She’s now living in TAILS’ Dancing Cat Solarium as she dreams of having a Forever Home. She likes to play with toys and other cats. From you, she wants hugs, love and a good life. Juno likes the outdoors and walks on a harness! She’s a wonderful cat waiting just for you!



Buddy



He’s 7-years old but because he’s small, he has many good years ahead. Buddy is a Brussels Griffon mix. His owner passed away and he’s looking for a nice, quiet home. He quickly bonds to his owner. Big dogs and children frighten him

because of their quick movements. Buddy does get along well with small dogs and cats. He likes a good walk and walks well on a leash. Once home, he’ll sit on your lap or snuggle next to you.

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He likes to push a squeaky toy against your foot just to hear it squeak or is it to let you know he's there? Buddy is ready for a new buddy for life. Please visit him soon and make him your next best friend.

Batty



It's easy to see how she got her name with her bat-like ears. She's a 1-year old Miniature Pinscher/Chihuahua mix. She's housetrained, crate-trained, was loose in

the house at night. Batty loves to sit in your lap or play with toys. She is good with kids. Her adopters returned her after three months because they had a change in lifestyle. Quick description of her would be: Batty is a well-mannered goofball and a little living doll.

Eve

She's a dear Lab mix who arrived from Oklahoma with her 10 puppies! They're in foster care but Eve is ready for her loving Forever Home. She's a loving girl who is 2-years old and a medium size. She seeks attention and prefers to play with people rather than toys. She'll softly jump into your lap and lean into you for some close snuggles. She's intelligent, gentle and would like a home filled with love.



Michael

He's on the look-out for his adopters to find him in the Dancing Cat Solarium! He's a small 2-year old who came to TAILS as a stray and had a

loving home for 2-years. He's had some dental work and in great shape now. He's eager to go home with you! He's a delightful cat who solicits attention with his meows and purrs. He enjoys playing with toys and people! Maybe you?

Nancy

She's a small 5-year old cat who lived most of her life outdoors. After being brought to TAILS, she liked indoor comforts in the home of her foster parents and in Kitty Korner at TAILS. Nancy was a good mom but now wants a life of leisure with people who will love her. She's a mild-mannered, mellow cat who would be a wonderful addition to a family. Nancy also likes the company of other cats. Do you have a Forever Home for her? Visit Nancy today!



Love Bug

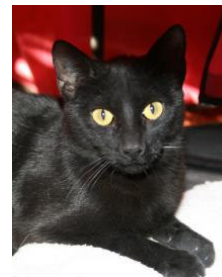


Love Bug is the perfect descriptive name for this 1-year old Pit Bull Terrier mix. His owner had landlord issues and now you have the chance to make him your BFF. Love Bug

LOVES people first and toys second. If you get tired of tossing a ball, he'll run over and toss it to himself. Life is exciting to this guy! He's smart, too, and knows some commands. Love Bug is a great companion!

Kitty Girl

She's a 1-year old little cat weighing just 7-pounds. She was found in the woods and when cold weather was setting in, a kind person brought her to TAILS. Now she loves living indoors. She's made friends with other cats in TAILS' Dancing Cat Solarium but she would rather have a Forever Home with a loving person to call her own.



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Bugs

He's a beautiful pure white rabbit with pink eyes. Bugs is 3-years old. He's lived with children but when one developed allergies, they had to give Bugs to TAILS to find another home.

Yours? Bugs is a super-friendly rabbit. He's a perfect pet!

TAILS also has mice, gerbils, hamsters and a rat ready for homes.



February Special: Any dental cleaning* done in February or March will receive a free mini-panel on the day of the procedure to evaluate for kidney, liver, and anemia issues. A \$45 value. Mention this special when you schedule your pet's dental cleaning to receive this great offer.

*Elderly or compromised pets will require more extensive bloodwork that requires us to send the sample to a lab at least two days prior to procedure. Clients will receive \$40 off the cost of this bloodwork.

Upcoming Event: Behavior Training Class:

Please see below for information regarding behavior training and classes given by Susan Brown. These classes focus on helping owners understand the way the companion animal brain works, and how to communicate effectively while creating opportunities in which your pet can succeed, thus strengthening his or her confidence and eagerness to continue learning. Classes are open to individuals and discounts are available for those who work or volunteer in the animal care field.

PRINCIPALS OF LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION IN ANIMALS (For All Species)

This is the core course that will form the foundation for all other courses and workshops on training. This course will help you develop an understanding of how animals learn and through this information then help you solve behavioral problems as well as preventing future problems.

This course is often the only one many people need to solve common behavioral problems and develop the relationship they always wanted with their pet.

Next Scheduled Class:

Date: March 6, 13 and 27, 2011

Time: 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Location: Arboretum View Animal Hospital
2551 Warrenville Road
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Directions:

<http://www.avah.org/about/directions/>

Upcoming Event: Go Fetch! Homeless Pet Food Drive:

This May it will be time for the annual Nationwide "Go Fetch" food drive for homeless animals. This drive is highlighted each year for the entire month of May. Events are held at shelters, veterinary clinics, schools and other places to collect food, bedding supplies, identification supplies and other items necessary to keeping pets healthy and happy, then donated to organizations dedicated to helping the animals left destitute to brave the elements on the streets, those in animal shelters, animals of low-income families, those of neglect and abuse, and animals with human companions in homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and at food banks and pantries.

Thanks for your patronage. Next month, we'll feature reasons to spay and neuter your pet, as well as how to keep your pet safe and healthy in early spring. If you would like to opt out of receiving the Elburn Animal Hospital newsletter, please contact us at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.