

Animal Dental Health

What Does Dental Health Mean For Pets?

Dental disease is a serious condition. If untreated, it leads to pain, infection, septicaemia (infection in the blood stream), heart disease and nutritional deficiency. The importance of preventive dentistry measures in human medicine is well-recognized, but how many of us have ever brushed our pet's teeth, particularly on a daily basis? It is little surprise then, that dental disease is one of the most common conditions seen by veterinarians.

Can I Help Prevent Dental Disease in My Pet?

The gold standard for preventing dental disease is to brush your pet's teeth every day. This is a commitment that won't work for everyone, or every pet. If you are interested in brushing your pet's teeth, please have a chat to a team member at the Bendigo Animal Hospital, for helpful tips on how to complete the brushing process with a minimum of fuss for all involved. We also stock special toothbrushes and toothpaste for your pets. Please do not use human toothpaste for your pet!

Apart from regular brushing, an appropriate diet is one of the most effective ways of preventing dental disease. We recommend a diet comprising a good quality dry food and some dental friendly treats. Please discuss your pet's diet with your veterinarian to get the right mix for your animal. If your pet is prone to developing dental disease, we may recommend a special prescription diet to reduce the build-up of plaque and tartar.

Other dental-friendly products, such as Healthy Mouth and Greenies are available. Healthy Mouth is a supplement that can be added to your pet's drinking water, while Greenies are a dental-friendly chewy treat.

How is Dental Disease Treated?

Once plaque and tartar develop on the tooth's surface, it can only be removed by physically scraping it away.

A dental clean involves your pet spending the day in hospital. Your pet will be put under general anaesthetic, and the teeth will be cleaned using an ultrasonic scaler, and then polished. In severe cases of dental disease, certain teeth may have lost attachment to the gums, and may need to be removed. If necessary, dogs and cats can cope well with the loss of several teeth and, with special care, can cope without any teeth. However, it is always better for your pet's overall health and well-being, to prevent dental disease developing, and to manage the disease in its early stages, rather than having to extract multiple teeth.

If you are concerned about your pet's teeth, please make an appointment to see your veterinarian before booking dental treatment for your pet. In some cases, we may wish to give your pet medication for a few days before the procedure.

If you have any further questions about your pet's dental health, please discuss them with your veterinarian.