



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2 • FEBRUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL PET DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

To focus on the importance of proper dental hygiene for pets, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and several veterinary groups have designated February as National Pet Dental Health Month. Veterinary dentistry, similar to human dentistry, includes preventive care and cleaning, adjustments and repair, and extraction of teeth.

According to the AVMA, periodontal disease is the most common dental condition in cats and dogs. By the time your pet is 3 years old, he or she may already show evidence of early periodontal disease. Most dental disease occurs below the gum line, so even though your pet's teeth may look healthy, damage may be occurring. Bad breath, drooling, reduced appetite, abnormal chewing, and swollen gums are just a few of the signs that your pet may be experiencing dental problems.

Advanced periodontal disease can cause severe problems for your pet—it's not just the teeth that are affected. When teeth are not cleaned regularly, bacteria from plaque can enter your kitty's bloodstream and cause permanent damage to organs including the heart, heart valves, lungs, liver, and kidneys.

The first step in diagnosing and treating dental disease is having your veterinarian give your kitty a thorough oral exam. This can identify potential problems such as plaque and tartar buildup, periodontal disease, gingivitis, and fractured or abscessed teeth.

If dental treatment is recommended after the exam, pre-anesthetic lab work will be conducted to evaluate metabolic function. (General anesthesia is necessary for most types of feline dental treatment, including extractions.) Once any metabolic issues are addressed, your kitty will be scheduled for a dental procedure which will include dental x-rays, cleaning, and extractions (if needed). Aftercare typically includes giving antibiotics and pain medication at home, plus follow-up oral evaluations at our office.

After treatment, your veterinarian may recommend supplementing your kitty's regular diet with special dental diets or chews, which can help keep his or her teeth

clean. Plaque can build up in less than 30 hours, so your veterinarian may also recommend brushing your cat's teeth at home (we'll provide the instructions).

If it's been awhile since your kitty last had a dental evaluation, or if your kitty has bad breath or any other symptoms mentioned above, please call us to schedule an exam. After the exam, if your veterinarian recommends dental treatment, now's the perfect time to schedule the procedure—please see our February special offer below for great savings!



THE IMPORTANCE OF MICROCHIPPING YOUR KITTY

No matter how careful you may be, it's a fact of life that sometimes pets get lost. Statistics show that one in three pets will become lost during their lifetime, and only 2 out of 100 lost, unidentified cats will find their way back home again.

Microchips are an invaluable tool that could reunite you with your feline family member. They are a safe and effective way to identify your cat in the event he or she becomes lost. Please ask us for more information about microchipping.



FEBRUARY SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

Schedule your kitty's dental procedure by February 29 and receive a \$100 discount! (The appointment may be made for any future date—but you must contact us by February 29 to schedule it.)

Please stop by our front desk for more information or to make your appointment.



Don't miss an issue of our newsletter! Sign up to receive each month's issue by email. To subscribe, just go to www.sacramentocathospital.com, or speak with one of our team members.

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