



# Western Hills Animal Hospital

[www.WesternHillsPets.com](http://www.WesternHillsPets.com)

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## WHY GOOD DENTAL HYGIENE IS IMPORTANT

- **Dental Disease** is the #1 disease seen in General Practices. It is also the most underdiagnosed and undertreated disease seen. Periodontal Disease affects nearly 80% of all dogs and cats over 3 yrs. of age.
- **Gingivitis** starts when soft plaque hardens into rough tartar on the teeth. Gums look red and inflamed. Often the animal's breath is bad, but not always. Gingivitis leads to an infection called **Periodontal Disease**.
- **Periodontal Disease** causes bleeding gums, loss of teeth and infection that can spread to other major organs like the heart and kidneys. The mouth is sore and the animal is often not eating normally.

## WHY DENTAL DISEASE IS IMPORTANT TO TREAT

- Bacteria cause plaque formation on the tooth. As bacteria grow in the plaque and calcium is deposited, plaque becomes mineralized calculus.
- The oral infection caused by plaque and calculus may enter the bloodstream, potentially affecting the heart, liver, and kidneys.
- One of the biggest health threats periodontal disease poses is secondary heart valve infection. This is especially serious in pets that are older and pets that suffer from pre-existing heart conditions.
- Good oral health care can extend a pet's life up to 5 years and reduce the risk of serious secondary conditions.
- Periodontal disease is painful to the animal. The mouth gets sore with inflammation.

## SIGNS OF DENTAL DISEASE

- Bad breath
- Tartar buildup (yellow in color turning brown with advanced stages)
- Red, swollen gums (gingivitis)
- Bleeding gums
- Loose teeth

## THE DENTAL CLEANING PROCEDURE

A preanesthetic blood screen will be recommended for your pet. This involves drawing a sample of blood to be sent out to our laboratory. Results will come by fax the next day to determine your pet's health status and ability to tolerate anesthesia. The results will be shared with you before the dental cleaning procedure.

The day of the procedure your pet will be dropped off in the morning. Please fast your pet from food from midnight on. Your pet will be sedated and intubated with oxygen and aerrane anesthetic. The scaling, cleaning and polishing of the teeth will be painless for them. The procedure usually takes approximately 30 minutes. Within minutes of finishing, your pet will be awake. Within an hour, they will be able to walk outside and relieve themselves if need be. Our patients are usually ready to be picked up mid-afternoon.