

ANIMAL AND AVIAN MEDICAL CENTER'S

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Have you gotten a little too close to your favorite furry friend lately... and you realize their breath smells like something you take out to the tree lawn the night before garbage day? Well, dental health is a common concern for any pet owner. **February is Dental Health Month here at the AAMC** and we are proud to announce that we give **10% or \$20 off** (whichever is more!) dental services for the entire



month of February. You may ask why are we dedicating the January newsletter for a February special? Well, our dental schedule gets packed during February and we have difficulty adding any last minute dentals... so we decided to notify our dedicated newsletter readers a month in advance! If your furry friend is in need of a teeth cleaning, schedule now for February and take advantage of our specials!

Why do animals need their teeth cleaned?

Well, animals (just like people!) build up plaque and calculus on their teeth and can eventually lead to gingivitis, tooth loss, bad breath, sensitivity or pain in the mouth, periodontal disease, difficulty eating, tooth root abscesses and much more. In severe cases, bacteria found in the mouth can enter the blood stream through the vessels in the gums and cause systemic complications in the heart, lungs, kidneys or liver.



This photo shows late stage periodontal disease. Note the gum recession, tooth root exposure and pus along the gum line. This patient will need multiple teeth extracted in order to become comfortable and healthy.

What can I do to prevent dental complications in my pet?

Brush, brush, brush!! Just like in people, pets benefit from having their teeth brushed (but be SURE to use pet-friendly toothpaste; human toothpaste is toxic to animals!). For many clients, it's easier said than done. In recent years, many pet safe dental products have been developed to help those who are unable to brush their pet's teeth:

- Oral rinses
- Water additives
- Treats
- Veterinary specific dental diets
- Rawhides



What is the best way to brush my pet's teeth?

- Try watching a video for effective ways to handle your pet (our YouTube channel has excellent videos!)
- Try standing behind out pet, it can be less intimidating that being in front of them (see photos on page 2)
- Use **pet safe** toothpaste and find a flavor your pet
- Start by just massaging the gums and teeth with your finger. Once they are used to that, add a finger brush with a small amount of pet toothpaste. Depending on the size of your dog, you may eventually need to work up to a large tooth brush rather than the finger brush.
- Praise, praise, praise! For the best chances to train your pet to tolerate brushing, make it a positive experience! Don't stress yourself or the pet out, it will only create anxiety for all involved. Discontinue brushing if your pet becomes angry, growls or snaps.
- Training your pet to tolerate brushing at a young age will certainly help. However, you CAN teach an old dog (or cat) new tricks!

How often should I brush?

The standard recommendation is brushing twice daily... but who has the time for that? If you don't, a more realistic approach would be to brush every other day and give a dental treat or rawhide on the day you don't brush. Typically, small or toy breed dogs are most susceptible to developing severe dental disease early in life and would benefit from brushing daily, if possible. Attention to the teeth also helps us to determine what is normal for our pet so that we can easily identify any abnormalities like a tooth abscess or an oral tumor. Keep in mind, something is better than nothing! If your pet simply does not tolerate brushing, consider other methods of oral care such as dental specific diets (consult your veterinarian for best recommendation), rawhides or dental treats.



The dental procedure

It's important to remember, brushing isn't the cure-all. It does not remove built up calculus, tartar or clean below the gum line. Regular veterinary exams will determine if or when your pet will need to undergo anesthesia for a dental procedure. Why must they be under anesthesia for a dental? Two reasons: most pets won't sit still for the entire procedure and we have to intubate them in order to keep water from going into the lungs. A routine dental starts with probing below the gum line checking for pockets which can indicate instability in the tooth. If it is discovered that any teeth are unstable, the veterinarian will determine if they should be removed. An ultrasonic scaler is then used to remove built up calculus and tartar on the teeth. Finally the teeth are polished and the patient is recovered from anesthesia. The procedure can vary in length depending on the size of the patient and the progression of dental disease. Routine dentals generally last about 20-30 minutes once the pet has been anesthetized and intubated but will last longer if extractions are required. Postoperative care is minimal for a routine dental. If extractions have been performed, the veterinarian may recommend a soft diet for a few days following the procedure.

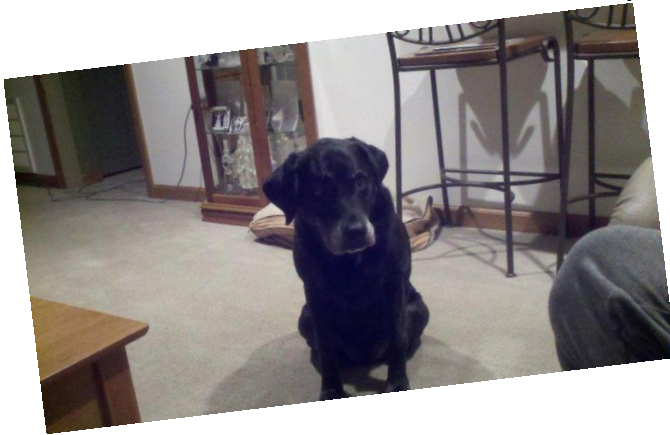
What type of dental treats or chews should I get for my pet?

The market is now inundated with products that claim to help keep your pets pearly whites... well... pearly. Truth is, different products have different uses and recommendations. Rawhides work great if used properly. Look for high quality rawhide chips or strips that are about the size of your pet's head. They do make them flavored in peanut butter, beef or pork, but flavoring can add color which may stain your pet, couch or carpet. Allowing 5-10 minutes of "chew time" should be sufficient for your pet; the rawhide can then be removed and replaced with a tastier treat as a reward. Rawhides are digestible, however they break down slowly so can cause some gastric upset in pets with sensitive systems. Nylabones also work well if your pets are interested in them, but be sure to get a large enough size bone and try not to allow your pet enough time to break off a piece and ingest it as they aren't digestible. The texture of Greenies also aids to prevent excessive buildup of plaque and can be given regularly. For pets with stomach or intestinal issues, Greenies might be the best choice as they break down quickly and easily in the stomach. Stay away from any treats or chews that contain bone or marrow as that can cause gastrointestinal upset. And don't forget: treats and chews are great, but they don't replace the need for brushing and dental cleaning!

CUTE FACE!!



January's CUTE FACE belongs to the LOVELY miss Kya!!!
She is a lab that is 11 years young and is SUCH a sweetie!!



Calendar of events:

January 21st, 2012: Medina County SPCA's Night at the Races-6:00 pm

Location: Rustic Hills Country Club.

Call the shelter 330-723-7722 for more details.

January 28, 2012: Berea ARF's Soup-R-Bowl Dinner- 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Location: Berea High School Cafeteria 165 East Bagley Road (at corner of Eastland), Berea, Oh 44017

Mark your calendars for ARF's Popular Annual SOUP-R-BOWL Dinner! Includes ALL YOU CAN EAT: Soups, Chili, Salad, Sandwich Wraps, Dessert Bar, Beverages, and More! Featuring: Raffles, Side Boards, ARF's Fashionable & Fun Merchandise, Vendors, and of course... ARF's wonderful, loving adoptables!! Please bring a donation item from ARF's Shelter "Most Wanted List."

Questions? Please EMAIL us at info@bereaanimalrescue.com! Interested in making a donation to the Soup-R-Bowl of a raffle basket, gift card/certificate or items like lottery tickets? Please drop us an EMAIL!

Thanks for reading 😊

