

Blue Ravine News

YOUR PET'S HEALTH IS OUR CONCERN

Volume 21 Issue 1

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Pet Dental Health Matters!

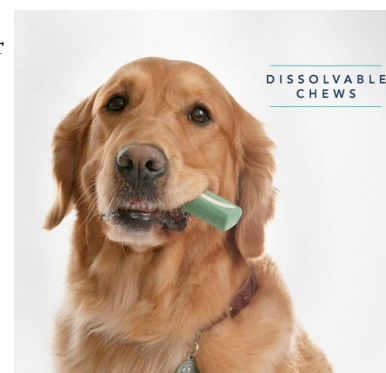
Dog Owners: Could your dog be suffering from Periodontal Disease? Take our Self Test and find out!

The quiz below will help you see if your dog is at risk. Your dog may be suffering from periodontal disease if you answer "Yes" to three or more of the following questions about risk factors or symptoms:

Answer Yes or No to the following questions:

Is your dog:

1. Three years old or more?
2. A smaller breed (Terrier, Schnauzer)?
3. Plagued with bad breath?
4. Showing a loss of appetite or a reluctance to eat?
5. Suffering from swollen or inflamed gums?
6. Lethargic or continually fatigued?
7. Showing moderate to heavy dental tarter?
8. Salivating excessively?
9. Showing pain when caressed near the mouth?
10. Leaving traces of blood on its chew toys?



11. Missing one or more teeth?
12. Often pawing at its mouth?
13. Losing a significant amount of weight?

If the total in the YES column is:

- 3 or more - your dog may have periodontal disease.
- 5 or more - your dog may have an advanced case of periodontal disease.
- 7 or more - your dog may have a severe case of periodontal disease.

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Pet Dental Health (cont'd.)

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How to Help Your Pet With Dental Problems

Don't ignore your pet's bad breath! Dental hygiene is often the cause of stinky breath, and it may indicate other important problems with your pet's health. We understand how easy it is to miss. Many of the problems that stem from poor hygiene occur where you can't see them - below your pet's gum line. The first line of defense is always home care. But while some animals (especially dogs) tolerate their owners handling their mouths and brushing their teeth, most (especially cats) will struggle or act out. That can always make oral care difficult at best, and ineffective at worst.

Beyond Brushing, the best way to ensure your pet's oral health is to have regular cleanings. Discuss a home hygiene regimen with your vet and how often you ought to have cleanings. This will also prevent dental issues from progressing to larger (and potentially deadly) internal issues, such as dysfunction or disease in the heart, kidneys, liver, or lungs.

In the wild, hiding pain, illness, or other weaknesses are survival instincts. Many times, your pet will have the same instincts, even in the safety and comfort of your home, so always keep an eye on your pet's eating habits and behaviors. Recognizing the difference between normal changes in mood and red flags can be difficult sometimes. What you interpret as a persistent grumpiness may actually be a sign that your pet is in pain.

New irritability, shying away from being touched (especially on the face and around the mouth or throat), sluggishness, loss of appetite or difficulty eating, and lethargy are all behavioral signs which may indicate illness. However, if you note any of the fol-



lowing physical changes, contact your Blue Ravine veterinarian immediately:

- Red and swollen gums
- Bleeding gums, especially when eating or when having teeth brushed
- Swelling around the mouth
- Oral abscesses
- Abnormal chewing
- Loose or missing teeth
- Discolored teeth
- Crusted build up at the edge of the gums
- Persistent bad or fetid breath
- Excessive drooling
- Weight loss



Unlike people, dogs rarely get cavities. They are much more prone to gum and periodontal disease related to buildup of tartar on the teeth. Tartar (also known as calculus) is a cement-like substance that forms when food particles and bacteria on the surfaces of the teeth are mineralized by substances in the saliva. Once food and bacteria are deposited on the teeth, it takes about 48 hours for tartar to begin to form.

If tartar is not removed, it will build up under the gums. It separates the gums from the teeth to form pockets, which, in turn, encourages even more bacterial growth. At this point the damage, called periodontal disease, is irreversible. It can be very painful and can lead to loose or lost teeth, abscesses, and bone loss or infection. As bacterial growth continues, the bacteria may enter the bloodstream. This can cause infection of the heart valves, liver, and kidneys. If treated by your veterinarian, periodontal disease can be slowed or stopped.

Remember, preventing oral infections and disease will help your pet live a longer, healthier life. Furthermore, caring for your pet with regular cleanings now will save you money later.

Anesthesia For Procedures

There are always risks when using an anesthetic, however, these risks are outweighed by the fact that this makes all procedures safer for your pet, safer for the vet, and ensures efficacy. Attempting procedures without anesthesia can present other dangers to the animal or vet. Especially when work needs to be done

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Pet Dental Health (cont'd.)

under the gum line, any movement could mean harm to your pet from dental equipment.

After all, your pet cannot have a reasoned discussion with staff the way you can with your dentist. Procedures are likely to make them afraid and they will probably try to get away. Animals who are in pain will often act defensively and are more likely to bite. Even when they're healthy, most animals cannot hold still long enough for procedures like X-rays to be completed correctly.

Advances in the latest anesthetics mean that for most normal procedures, your pet can go home on the very same day. They may be groggy, but their behavior should return to normal the next day.

Dental Procedures

The procedures veterinarians use to treat your pet's mouth are very close to the procedures a dentist uses for you. They provide a full offering of dental procedures including:

- **Hygiene:**
 - a. Scaling (removal of plaque and tartar above the gum line)
 - b. Polishing
 - c. Filing
 - d. Cleaning plaque and tartar below the gum line
 - e. X-rays to examine below the gum line for signs of disease
- **Oral Procedures:**
 - a. Endodontic therapy (Root canals)
 - b. Tooth restoration
 - c. Orthodontics
 - d. Periodontal disease treatments
 - e. Infection treatment
- **Surgical procedures:**
 - a. Fracture repairs
 - b. Extraction of teeth or dental pulp
 - c. Oral cancer or cysts treatment
 - d. Cleft palate treatment
 - e. Tooth abscess treatment

What Happens During a Dental Cleaning?

We strongly recommend testing your pet's blood prior to the procedure. It is important to evaluate your pet's health, especially its ability to process and excrete anesthetics.

- A full physical exam will be performed prior to anesthesia.
- An intravenous (IV) catheter will be placed to give us rapid access to a vein in case of emergency. You will also be given the option to have your pet receive fluids while under anes-

thesia. This helps maintain hydration, blood pressure, and proper circulation to all organs.

- Based on your pet's breed, age, and health status we will chose the safest combination of sedatives and anesthetic agents. Your pet will be maintained on inhaled gas anesthetic while the procedure is performed.



- A breathing tube will be placed to protect your pet's airway.
- The mouth will be flushed with a solution to kill bacteria.
- Full oral x-rays will be taken of all teeth.
- All teeth will be ultrasonically cleaned to remove plaque and bacteria above and below the gum line.
- Each tooth and the gum around it are inspected for any signs of disease. Any abnormalities or additional procedures will be recorded during the dental exam on a chart.
- We may recommend extraction of diseased, fractured, painful, or otherwise damaged teeth. You may inform us beforehand if you would like such teeth to be extracted, or you may request that we call you while your pet is under anesthesia to discuss any potential extractions.
- The teeth will be polished to remove microscopic scratches.
- We will give an antibiotic injection to help kill bacteria.

Call Blue Ravine Animal Hospital today for an examination and treatment for your pet's dental issues!



Keep a Healthy Smile!



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BLUE RAVINE OFFICE HOURS

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm; Saturday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday, closed.
For emergencies outside regular office hours, please call MarQueen Pet Emergency & Specialty, 916 757-6600
or Sacramento Veterinary Referral Center, 916 362-3111.

www.blueravineanimalhospital.com

INSTANT REBATE, With purchase of...
1 yr Heartgard and 1 yr NexGard: \$60 off
OR...
1 yr Heartgard and 6 mos NexGard: \$30 off



To purchase your Heartgard and NexGard, call
Blue Ravine Animal Hospital:
916-984-0990
Coupon expires March 31, 2023

BLUE RAVINE ANIMAL HOSPITAL
1770 Prairie City Rd., Folsom, CA.