

## DENTAL DISEASE

Dental disease affects 85% of dogs and cats over 2 years of age. So if your pet has smelly breath it is very likely to be caused by dirty teeth and gums. Other signs of dental disease are dribbling, reluctance to eat hard foods and sometimes swelling of the face.

Left untreated long term, dental disease can spread infection elsewhere in the body including the heart and kidneys. It can also result in anorexia, weight loss, chronic pain and loose teeth.

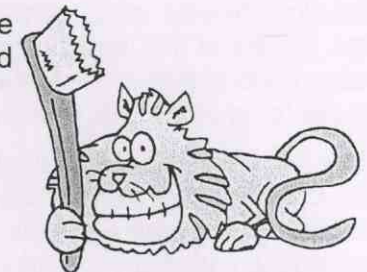
Small breed dogs are particularly prone to dental disease as are dogs and cats on soft food diets.

Dental disease starts with plaque – the hard yellow stuff that forms on teeth. Plaque is mostly made of bacteria. With time, gingivitis (tender red gums) develops, then pockets begin to form between the tooth roots and the gums causing the teeth to rot.

Dental treatment for cats and dogs must be performed under a general anaesthetic. We recommend pre-anaesthetic blood tests and intra-operative fluids to reduce the risks of anaesthetic complications. During a dental we assess each tooth one by one and the gums thoroughly. Depending on the health of the tooth it is either scaled and polished or extracted. Pain relief is administered prior to and after the dental procedure.

There are a number of ways to keep your pet's breath fresh and to prevent the development of dental disease. These are best used in combination and include:

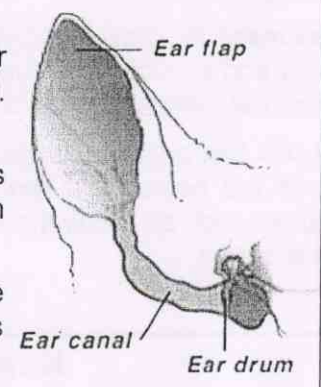
- \* Diet
- \* Periovac Vaccine—Dogs only
- \* Tooth Brushing
- \* Aquadent—Drinking water additive
- \* Vegedent/Greenies—Dental Chews



## EAR CLEANING

Here's a step by step guide to cleaning your dogs ears. Ears should be cleaned every 1-2 weeks.

1. **SET UP + RESTRAINT** If you have a second person to help hold and talk to your dog it does make this job easier but is not essential. Pick a room that is easy to clean (e.g. kitchen, laundry) as ear cleaning can be messy. Get your dog to sit and rub its ears.
2. **SQUEEZE** Hold the ear to be cleaned with one hand and the ear cleaner (e.g. Epiotic) upside down just over the opening of the ear with the other hand. Squeeze solution into the ear canal.
3. **MASSAGE** Continue to hold the ear up to prevent your dog from shaking its head. Massage the base of the ear gently to distribute the cleaning solution down the ear canal and help break up any wax and discharge.
4. **SHAKE AND WIPE** Allow your pet to shake its head to remove some of the solution. Then use cotton wool balls to wipe away any discharge and excess cleaning solution.

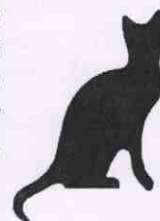


## CASE OF THE MONTH—RONAN

Ronan is a friendly 2 year old male domestic shorthair cat. Unfortunately he was hit by a car and sustained significant damage to his face. Ronan was covered in gravel and blood when he first came to us. His chin was torn off the jaw bone and left hanging, there were cuts inside his mouth, his jaw was broken through the middle and his left eye was swollen up. He was initially stabilised with fluid therapy and pain relief as well as medication to reduce the pressure in his damaged eye. His torn chin was cleaned and temporarily stapled back where it should be to prevent further damage as Ronan stabilised.

The next day when Ronan was feeling a bit better he underwent a general anaesthetic to have x rays to check for any further damage, wire his broken jaw back together and to stitch his mouth and chin up. By day two the pressure in his sore eye had reduced but the eye was not responsive to light.

Ronan was eating again on day three and much brighter in himself with his face back in alignment. On day 4 he was discharged with instructions for medication, soft food and rest. He revisited the following week and his eye was back to almost normal and now partially responsive to light. Six weeks later the wire around Ronan's jaw was ready to be removed. His chin and jaw had healed beautifully. Unfortunately he had developed a large corneal ulcer on his damaged eye. The ulcer was treated by pulling part of the ocular membranes up over the eye to act as a natural bandage as the ulcer healed underneath. This natural bandage has recently been removed. The ulcer has healed well but we will continue to monitor Ronan's eye carefully to assess for permanent damage and decide whether any ongoing treatment is necessary. So Ronan is almost back to his normal self after his big collision thanks to his very dedicated owners!



## **FELINE LOWER URINARY TRACT DISEASE (FLUTD)**

Bladder problems are common in cats. They result in a range of signs including bloody urine, peeing small amounts frequently, straining to pee, licking at the genitalia, vocalisation during toileting and peeing in inappropriate places. Most often an owner will notice that their cat needs to go in and out frequently, is unsettled and may urinate inside.

Male cats with FLUTD can sometimes have an obstructed urethra. In this case you will notice your cat straining to pee repetitively without producing any urine. This is an emergency situation and needs immediate veterinary attention.

FLUTD is a multi-factorial disease – meaning lots of different things contribute to it. Some of these include obesity, laziness, indoor cats, stress, cold weather, diets with a high magnesium or ash content and middle age.

During an episode of FLUTD the bladder wall becomes red and angry. Urinary crystals and more rarely bacteria may be involved.

Treatment is provided through diet manipulation, anti-inflammatory drugs and bladder wall supplements. If the urethra is obstructed then a urethral catheter needs to be placed to relieve the obstruction.

FLUTD can be a challenging disease to manage as it often reoccurs. There are however a few things you can do to maintain a healthy bladder such as feeding a specialised prescription diet and increasing water intake.

## **Repeat Prescriptions**

We have had a number of enquires about why revisits are required for repeat prescriptions lately. Just as people need to visit their doctor for ongoing prescriptions, we need to see your pet in consult every 6 months to continue dispensing medication to them. In some cases such as diabetes even more frequent visits are required. This is a requirement set out by the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (ACVM) Act. It is for the well being of your pet. Regular revisits allow us to assess how your pet is responding to the medication and make adjustments if necessary. It also is a good opportunity to bring up any further health concerns you may have with your pet.



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