

Happy New Year!

It is time for New Year resolutions and this year we would like you to consider including your pets! Let's make your pet's teeth a priority this year by starting an at-home dental program. Many pets may need to have their teeth professionally cleaned to get off to a good start. Here is some information to help you get started:

Dental disease is the number one disease in veterinary medicine today for dogs and cats. Not many people understand the importance of dental home care and regular dental cleanings with your veterinarian.

Daily removal of plaque is the key to an oral hygiene program. Unless your pet's teeth are brushed daily, plaque, which is an accumulation of bacteria, will build up at the gum line. Eventually calculus forms, further irritating the gums, and then infection progresses to loosen and destroy the attachment of the tooth. In addition to loose teeth, infection can spread to the liver, kidneys, and heart.

It is important to be proactive when it comes to dental health. Many patients we see come in with severe dental disease and there are some teeth that cannot be salvaged due to the severity of infection.

Your veterinarian should perform an oral exam when your pet comes in for regular checkups or if your pet presents for an illness. During the exam, tartar build up and gingivitis may be observed, as well as any fractures or obvious gum recession. Depending on what is seen during the oral exam a dental may be recommended.

All patients need to be under anesthesia for a thorough dental scaling and polish. The veterinarian will be able to perform another more thorough exam under anesthesia. Tooth scaling, subgingival scaling (cleaning under the gum line), polishing, and addressing any other oral lesions will be performed during your pet's dental.

Our number one goal after a dental is to give you all the information you need for preventative at-home care. Your pet needs your help to be able to have a healthy mouth and fresh breath.

February is National Pet Dental Health Month. In support of National Dental Month Meridian Veterinary Hospital will be offering a more economical way in this down economy to help care for your pet's teeth. Dental month is an opportunity to improve your pet's oral health while receiving 15% off the scale and polish cost of the dental, which also includes the exam, hospitalization, and anesthesia.