

ALDERGROVE animal HOSPITAL

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What is Involved in a Dental Cleaning?

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No matter how diligent you are with dental home care all pets will eventually require a professional dental cleaning. Proper cleaning of a dog or cats mouth requires a full anesthetic. I know that I do not like having my teeth polished and ultrasonic scaling and tartar removal below the gumline hurts! Even the most well behaved pet will not sit still long enough to properly scale and polish the teeth. Proper dental health is a multistage program fstarting with a complete dental exam, cleaning under anesthetic and homecare after the procedure. The procedure involves dropping your pet off at the hospital in the morning and picking up later in the afternoon. Most procedures require approximately 1 hour of anesthetic.

1.Pre-anesthetic Blood and Urine Testing We perform blood and urine testing prior to anesthetic to ensure a safe anesthetic and recovery.

2.Anesthetic and Monitoring In order to perform a proper dental cleaning all pets need to be anesthetized. Upon arrival at the hospital your pet will be sedated to allow a easy anesthetic. While under anesthetic all pets have their blood pressure and heart rate monitored. Senior pets will have an intravenous catheter placed to deliver intravenous fluids to help maintain blood pressure during anesthetic.

3. Supragingival (above the gumline) plaque and tartar removal using calculus removing forceps, hand instruments, and power scaling equipment. Supragingival deposits are removed from all surfaces of the teeth. When used properly, the ultrasonic scaler removes plaque and tartar from the teeth. Heat generated by an ultrasonic scaler can cause severe damage to the tooth and periodontal support. Ultrasonic units must be used on crowns and exposed root surfaces only.

4.Subgingival (below the gumline) scaling, root planing, curettage. Curettes are used to remove subgingival deposits. Although this is the most uncomfortable part of the procedure, it is also the most important. Anesthetic prevents your pet from feeling anything.

5. Polishing. Regardless of how careful we are during the scaling/curettage phase of teeth cleaning, minor defects of the tooth surface occur. Polishing smoothes out the defects and removes plaque missed during previous steps. This is the part that we all recognize from our dentist where the hygienist makes us keep our mouth open forever and uses the rotating rubber tooth brush with the foul tasting toothpaste. (I would like to be asleep just so I would not have to taste the toothpaste)

6. Fluoride We do not use fluoride as it can be toxic to small dogs and cats and is of questionable benefit since cats and dogs do not get the same type of cavities as humans.

7. Charting Charting includes noting missing, loose, fractured, and discolored teeth, as well as feline oral resorptive lesions (cavities), periodontal pocket depths, gingival recession, and other significant lesions.

8. Homecare Recommendations You the pet owner are an integral part of our dental team! The dental visit is not complete until discussion is held on maintaining and improving oral health. Home care is the single most important procedure the owner can do to maintain oral health. If performed regularly, daily brushing will dramatically increase the interval between teeth cleaning appointments.