

DOCTOR'S NOTES

It should not be surprising that dental health requires regular professional cleaning. Home care of the teeth, while great, does not replace the need for professional cleaning. The cleaning performed at DeLand Animal Hospital is done while under anesthesia and includes many steps. Here is a brief overview of what is involved in a routine dental cleaning for your pet:

Gross (visible) tartar is removed with hand scalers. More delicate tartar deposits are removed from the gum line with ultrasonic scalers. Periodontal pockets are probed and measured to assess periodontal disease. The roots are planed, (meaning tartar is scraped from below the gum line) until the roots are smooth. The enamel is polished to remove any unevenness left by tartar removal. The mouth is disinfected and treated with a fluoride sealer. Professional notes are taken on a dental chart, noting abnormalities on each of the dog's 42 teeth, or the cat's 30 teeth. We will provide before and after pictures of your pet's oral health!

EVENTS

February is Pet Dental Awareness Month!

We are offering Dental Month Specials: get a free bag of dental products with every dental prophylaxis performed!

10% off every Dental Prophylaxis

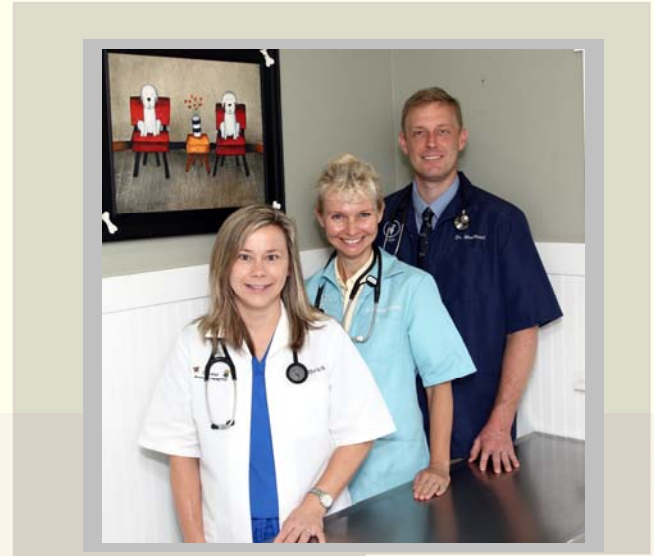
Spa Day for February is Tuesday, February 28, 2012

Mardi Gras on Mainstreet: February 18, 2012 Downtown DeLand. Come and watch the parade and cheer for DeLand Animal Hospital!

Cat spay/neuter day for February is Thursday, February 9, 2012.

We love our clients! On Valentine's Day we are giving away free Heartgard shirts to all scheduled appointments!

Also get a free Heartgard shirt with the purchase of 12 months of heartworm prevention



OUR DOCTORS

FEBRUARY IS DENTAL MONTH

DeLand Animal Hospital is dedicated to the well being of all of our patients and their overall health! But February is Pet Dental Awareness Month and to go along with that we are offering several specials!

1st: Get a free bag of dental products with every dental prophylaxis performed! These are to help keep up with dental health after the dental is performed.

2nd: All Dental Prophylaxis in February will be discounted 10%!

3rd: Before and After pictures of your pet's teeth!

Every patient that comes in for a dental will need to be current on vaccines for the health and safety of all of our patients!

PET TIPS

DELAND ANIMAL HOSPITAL'S
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2012

TIPS FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF YOUR PET!

9 Tips for Better Dental Health in Dogs

Did you know that regularly brushing your dog's teeth and providing it with a healthy diet and plenty of chew toys can go long way toward keeping it mouth healthy? Many pooches show signs of gum disease by the time they're four years old because they aren't provided with proper mouth care-and bad breath is often the first sign of a problem. Give your dog regular home checks and follow the tips below, and you'll have a very contented pooch with a dazzling smile.

1. The Breath Test

Sniff your dog's breath. Not a field of lilies? That's okay-normal doggie-breath isn't particularly fresh-smelling. However, if his breath is especially offensive and is accompanied by a loss of appetite, vomiting or excessive drinking or urinating, it's a good idea to take your pooch to the vet.

2. Lip Service

Once a week, with your dog facing you, lift his lips and examine his gums and teeth. The gums should be pink, not white or red, and should show no signs of swelling. His teeth should be clean, without any brownish tartar.

3. Signs of Oral Disease

The following are signs that your dog may have a problem in his mouth or gastrointestinal system and should be checked by a veterinarian:

- Bad breath
- Excessive drooling
- Inflamed gums
- Tumors in the gums
- Cysts under the tongue
- Loose teeth

4. The Lowdown on Tooth Decay

Bacteria and plaque-forming foods can cause build-up on a dog's teeth. This can harden into tartar, possibly causing gingivitis, receding gums and tooth loss. One solution? Regular teeth cleanings, of course.



Teeth before cleaning



Teeth after cleaning



Happy teeth!

(8 continued)

Gingivitis is an inflammation of the gums caused mainly by accumulation of plaque, tartar and disease-producing bacteria above and below the gum line. Signs include bleeding, red, swollen gums and bad breath. It is reversible with regular teeth cleanings.

Halitosis-or bad breath-can be the first sign of a mouth problem and is caused by bacteria growing from food particles caught between the teeth or by gum infection. Regular tooth-brushings are a great solution.

Swollen gums develop when tartar builds up and food gets stuck between the teeth. Regularly brushing your dog's teeth at home and getting annual cleanings at the vet can prevent tartar and gingivitis. Proliferating gum disease occurs when the gum grows over the teeth and must be treated to avoid gum infection. An inherited condition common to boxers and bull terriers, it can be treated with antibiotics.

9. Chew on This

Chew toys can satisfy your dog's natural desire to chomp, while making his teeth strong. Gnawing on a chew toy can also help massage his gums and help keep his teeth clean by scraping away soft tartar. Ask your vet to recommend toxin-free rawhide, nylon and rubber chew toys.

P.S.: Gnawing also reduces your dog's overall stress level, prevents boredom and gives him an appropriate outlet for his natural need to chew.

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5. Canine Tooth-Brushing Kit

Get yourself a toothbrush made especially for canines or a clean piece of soft gauze to wrap around your finger. Ask your vet for a toothpaste made especially for canines or make a paste out of baking soda and water. Never use fluoride with dogs under six months of age-it can interfere with their enamel formation. And please do not use human toothpaste, which can irritate a dog's stomach. Special mouthwash for dogs is also available-ask your vet.

6. Brightening the Pearly Whites

Taking these steps will make brushing a lot easier for the both of you:

First get your dog used to the idea of having her teeth brushed.

Massage her lips with your finger in a circular motion for 30 to 60 seconds once or twice a day for a few weeks. Then move on to her teeth and gums.

When your pooch seems comfortable being touched this way, put a little bit of dog-formulated toothpaste or a paste of baking soda and water on her lips to get her used to the taste.

Next, introduce a toothbrush designed especially for dogs-it should be smaller than a human toothbrush and have softer bristles.

Toothbrushes that you can wear over your finger (or a clean piece of gauze) are also available and allow you to give a nice massage to your dog's gums.

Finally, apply the toothpaste to her teeth for a gentle brushing, as in step 7.

A veterinary exam beforehand may be helpful to find out if your dog's gums are inflamed. If your dog has mild gingivitis, brushing too hard can hurt her gums.

7. Brushing Technique

Yes, there is actually a technique! Place the brush or your gauze-wrapped finger at a 45-degree angle to the teeth and clean in small, circular motions. Work on one area of your dog's mouth at a time, lifting her lip as necessary. The side of the tooth that touches the cheek usually has the most tartar, and giving a final downward stroke can help to remove it. If your dog resists having the inner surfaces of her teeth cleaned, don't fight it-only a small amount of tartar accumulates there. Once you get the technique down, go for a brushing two or three times a week.

8. Know Your Mouth Disorders

Getting familiar with the possible mouth problems your dog may encounter will help you determine when it's time to see a vet about treatment:

Periodontal disease is a painful infection between the tooth and the gum that can result in tooth loss and spread infection to the rest of the body. Signs are loose teeth, bad breath, tooth pain, sneezing and nasal discharge.