

What to expect if your pet needs dental care.

Not all dentistry is created equal. We differ from most animal hospitals in that our dental procedure is called a **COHAT**. This stands for **C**omprehensive **O**ral **H**ealth **A**ssessment and **T**reatment. This is a very descriptive term of what every dental patient requires. Each Oral Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention plan is unique to each individual patient and includes several steps:

1. General exam before anesthesia and pre-operative screening based on history and health status.
2. A complete oral examination can be performed only under general anesthesia and will include examination of the oral and dental structures.
3. Removal of gross (visible) tartar above the gumline.
4. Removal of tartar below the gumline (subgingival) or root planning where indicated
5. Periodontal pockets are probed around each tooth to assess periodontal disease.
One to two millimeters of probe depth is normal around each tooth. However, in teeth affected by periodontal disease, depths may increase to the point where the teeth may not be salvageable. Extraction will then be necessary.
6. Tooth polishing is performed to remove any unevenness left by tartar removal.
6. The mouth is disinfected and treated with a fluoride sealer.
7. Post cleaning exam and dental x-rays. Xrays show the inside of the teeth and the root that lies below the gumline. 60% of pathology lies underneath the gum-line. When left untreated it spreads to other teeth and in severe disease may affect liver, kidneys and heart. Many decisions are based on x-ray findings, specifically if the tooth can be saved or needs to be extracted.
9. Dental charting to create a treatment plan.
10. Therapy if necessary.
11. Home care instructions.

It is important to note that a “non-anesthetic” teeth cleaning is not comparable to the above service. These cosmetic cleanings do not address periodontal disease where it occurs: under the gumline.

The estimate given will include preoperative tests, anesthesia and monitoring, IV catheter and fluids, possible antibiotics and pain medication, and a general guideline as to the level of therapy we anticipate will be necessary. However, frequently in periodontal disease we encounter more advanced disease and/or additional conditions that may require intervention. We will need to be able to contact you during the procedure should unanticipated treatment be necessary. This may also change the estimate.