

Dental Services

Gingivitis and other oral diseases are very common in cats and dogs. Gingivitis is a painful condition and adversely affects your pet's health and happiness, and chronic infections in the mouth can lead to disease in other organs such as the heart and kidneys. We feel very strongly that good oral health is essential to help maintain your pet's happiness and strive to offer the best in care.

When your pet is admitted to the Shaughnessy Veterinary Hospital for a dental procedure, she will first receive a complete physical examination. Pre-anesthetic blood tests will be reviewed by the doctor and the anesthetic protocol will be determined based on your pet's condition. She will be given a mild sedative to help her relax, and an intravenous catheter will be put into her front leg for fluids and medications. She will then be given the anesthetic drug through this catheter and the breathing tube is inserted into her trachea. The breathing (endotracheal) tube allows us to administer the gas anesthetic and oxygen that keeps your pet asleep and also protects her from breathing in the nasty bits of plaque and tartar we are cleaning off her teeth.

Once your pet is fully anesthetized a full examination of the mouth and lips is performed. Any abnormalities or problems are noted and brought to the attention of the doctor.

Your pet's teeth are then cleaned with a combination of the ultrasonic scaler and hand instruments. A probe is used to check for loose gingival (gum) tissue, holes, or other problems such as fractured or infected teeth.



The tartar is being removed from this dog's teeth using the ultrasonic scaler

Fractured or otherwise abnormal teeth are x-rayed to assess the health of the roots and surrounding bone. All cats undergoing a dental procedure have full-mouth digital dental x-rays, as they are notorious for hiding problems below the gums.

After the cleaning, x-rays, and any extractions are completed, all surfaces of the teeth are polished, the mouth is rinsed with an antibacterial mouthwash, a final check and charting is completed and then your pet is woken up.

The average small dog is under anesthetic for approximately 45 minutes; larger dogs, pets needing extractions or other oral surgery will be asleep for longer.

Most pets will be sent home with a few days of antibiotics and some additional pain control. We will schedule a follow-up appointment to ensure everything has healed well and to review dental care at home.