

Feline Dental Healthcare

Kittens:



The first step in taking care of a kitten's oral health is daily brushing. One of the easiest ways to do this is with a finger brush. Kittens can benefit from annual or semiannual teeth cleanings, which veterinarians often refer to as a 'dental prophylaxis.' Cleaning helps keep your kitten's teeth and gums healthy and is the only way to remove tartar. Dry food can be especially beneficial for oral health because the mechanical brushing action of the kibble helps remove plaque and works to scrub your kitten's teeth clean.

*Kittens let you know a lot about how they're feeling by the way they behave. The following behaviors can indicate an oral health issue:

- Excessive chewing
 - Pawing at the mouth
 - Irritability
 - Reluctance to chew toys
 - Depression
- Difficulty eating or chewing

If your kitten is showing any of these signs, ensure that you are properly caring for their teeth and consult with a vet.

Adult/Mature Cats:

The dental health of your adult cat is similar to the dental health of a kitten, however, there are a few key differences. When your cat has matured, its teeth will be fully grown in and your cat will have lost all of its baby teeth. Now that your cat is an adult, you should ensure proper oral health by doing the following:

- Tooth brushing
- Managing diet changes
- Use of toys to promote dental hygiene and proper oral health products
- Yearly dental cleanings



Elderly Cats:



Health issues involving teeth can cause severe pain for elderly cats. Oral issues can also lead to a wide range of other health problems and severely impact your older cat's quality of life. Cats are very good at hiding when they're in pain and it's often difficult to detect your cat's tooth troubles. Gingivitis in cats is a dental health issue caused by a buildup of plaque that leads to inflamed and painful gums, and, if left untreated, can lead to periodontal disease. The bacteria in plaque can gradually spread to the gums, where your cat's immune system response causes inflammation.

Causes of gingivitis:

- Feline leukemia virus
 - Feline immunodeficiency virus
 - Feline calicivirus
 - Diabetes
- Symptoms of gingivitis in cats may be:
- Red/swollen or bleeding gums
 - Bad breath and/or plaque buildup
 - Loss of appetite or pain when eating
 - Drooling
 - Irritability