



# Paw Prints Monthly

February 2012

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

Liberty Veterinary Hospital strives to create a state-of-the-art pet care facility that meets all of our clients' & pets' needs from nutritional supplies, boarding and grooming to the highest level of medical and surgical care. Because our team can only be as good as the sum of its parts, we nurture and educate our staff so that we may all provide uncompromising service, compassion, kindness and caring for each patient as a member of our own family.

## FEBRUARY IS DENTAL CARE MONTH

**Dental Disease is the most common ailments in cats and dogs, yet often goes unnoticed or untreated.**

You may smell bad breath, but the bacteria causing this odor can actually lead to organ damage within the:



heart



kidneys



liver



brain



and lungs.

We recommend you discuss dental care with your veterinarian right away. If you already have, then congratulations! Your pet is on the way to a happier, healthier smile.

If you haven't, this is the month to start! During National Dental Awareness Month we are offering **25% off Dental Cleanings performed in February** and 10% off dental products purchased on the same day as the Dental. Talk to us about bringing your pet in!

### PET DENTAL FACTS\*

Periodontal disease is the most common disease among dogs and cats.



According to the AVMA, "more than 85% of dogs and cats that are at least 4 years old have a condition in which bacteria attack the soft gum tissue. This condition is called periodontal disease. Periodontal disease is the final stage in a process that begins with the development of plaque on your pet's teeth."\*\*

- Periodontal disease is common in dogs of smaller breeds because dogs' teeth often are too large for their mouths, forcing the teeth closer together.
- Dogs start out with 28 deciduous (baby) teeth, cats start out with 26 deciduous teeth. By six months of age, these baby teeth fall out and are replaced by permanent teeth, 42 in the dog and 30 in the cat.
- Broken teeth are a common problem for dogs, especially among outdoor dogs. According to veterinary dental experts, aggressive chewing on hard objects is a primary cause of broken teeth in dogs.
- Resorptive lesions (resulting in loss of tooth structure) are the most common tooth disease in domestic cats. Studies show that about 28 percent of domestic cats develop at least one of these painful lesions during their lifetime.

\*www.petdental.com

\*\*www.avma.org

# ! DANGER

### SIGNS OF PERIODONTAL DISEASE

All pets are at risk for developing dental problems. Once a pet displays any of the warning signs below, serious periodontal disease may be present.

- Tooth loss
- Subdued behavior
- Abnormal drooling
- Dropping food out of the mouth
- Swallowing food whole
- Bad breath
- Yellow-brown crust on teeth
- Bleeding gums
- Going to the food bowl, but not eating
- Change of chewing or eating habits

Don't wait for these signs. Start a preventive program of veterinarian supervised dental care today.

### CAUSES OF PERIODONTAL DISEASE



Plaque is a colorless film that contains large amounts of bacteria. If left unchecked, plaque builds up, creating infection, destroying gums and resulting in the loss of the tissues and bone that support the teeth. Preventive oral care can reduce the formation of plaque and help maintain proper oral health

Preventative Tips

## How to brush your pet's teeth



When brushing your pet's teeth, hold the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the tooth surface and use small circular movements. Do not use toothpaste made for people as it can be toxic to pets. Veterinary toothpaste is available.

**D**aily tooth brushing is an essential part of your pet's health. As with any new learned behavior, it is important to start slowly, with patience and positive reinforcement, to condition your pet to allow the tooth brushing process. To start, place a small amount of veterinary toothpaste on your finger and let your pet sniff and lick it. If your pet shows interest in the flavor of the toothpaste, use it. If your pet is not interested in the toothpaste, brush the teeth without it. Do not use human toothpaste because it contains fluoride, which should not be swallowed. Concentrate on the outer surfaces of the teeth. Hold the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the tooth surface, with the bristles pointing toward the gum line. This allows the cleaning of the gum line while the teeth are being brushed. Work the toothbrush in a circular motion. Try for 15 seconds on each side of the mouth. Go slowly, and be patient. If things aren't going well, wait a few hours before trying again.

Ask Us! -

Our staff is thoroughly trained and will be happy to explain the benefits of our dental treatments, recommend in-home care programs that will fit your lifestyle, and teach you how to use the recommended products.

We believe very strongly in the benefits of good oral care and look forward to working with you and your pet on the road to good oral health.



Thank you for choosing Liberty Veterinary Hospital for all of your pets' health care needs. It is our pleasure to be a part of your family!

### Here are some things you can do to improve the dental health and life of your pet:



•**Diet** - It is very important to start preventative dentistry while your pet is still young. The right food can help fight plaque and calculus and provide optimal nutrition for your pets' life stage. Ask us to recommend a diet appropriate for your pet.



•**Water—CET Aquadent** water additive is a pet oral hygiene solution that is formulated to promote healthy gums & improve oral hygiene by fighting plaque. Aquadent contains Chlorhexidine, which kills the bacteria in the mouth that cause tartar & bad breath. It is very easy to use. The concentrated solution is simply added to your pet's drinking water daily. It is odorless & tasteless so your pet will not even notice. This is a good option for pets who will not tolerate products being directly applied to the teeth.



•**Treats—HEXtra Chews** - These are a great way to protect your dog's teeth because most dogs really enjoy them. Each chew is coated with 10% chlorhexidine solution, an anti-bacterial/anti-fungal medication which fights gingivitis. As long as your dog chews the product for more than one minute, chlorhexidine binds to the teeth and gingiva (gum tissue) providing sustained plaque control. Vegetarian variety (Veggedent chews) also available for dogs that have meat allergies.



•**Preventative—Oravet** - Oravet provides a protective coating on your pets' teeth that decreases plaque. We use this product after each of our professional teeth cleaning procedures, and you can use it at home weekly to maintain a protective coating.



•**Preventative—Brush!** - One of the best ways to prevent plaque buildup and decay is to brush daily. If your pet won't let you touch their teeth, ask us to have our groomer brush them for you at your pet's next grooming visit!