



# Superior Animal Hospital & Boarding Suites, Ltd.

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## Canine and Feline Dental Care Information Sheet

### How Important are my Pet's Teeth?

- Imagine what your teeth would feel like after not brushing them for one week, let alone one year or more.
- Dental disease is the most common disease of pets today.
- Over 85% of pets over age 4 have some form of dental disease.
- Brushing your pet's teeth regularly can increase their lifespan by 3 years.
- Dental disease has been directly linked to liver, kidney, and heart disease.
- Dental disease, including gingivitis (inflamed gums) and abscessed or fractured teeth are painful for your pet. Your pet may not show pain until the problem is severe.
- The main cause of halitosis (bad breath) in dogs and cats is dental disease.

### We Recommend...

- 1) An oral exam as part of your pet's yearly physical.
- 2) Daily brushing (we can show you how to do this).
- 3) Annual or semi-annual dental prophylaxis (teeth cleaning) under general anesthesia.
- 4) Hill's prescription diet t/d, which is specially formulated to help remove tartar from tooth surface and lengthen the time between professional cleanings.
- 5) Applying **OraVet** gel on a weekly basis to reduce dental tartar accumulation.

### What is involved in a dental prophylaxis?

- 1) A routine dental prophylaxis involves general anesthesia and a half day of hospitalization. Your pet will be dropped off in the morning and you will be able to pick him or her up in the afternoon.
- 2) A thorough oral exam under general anesthesia. We evaluate the severity of your pet's periodontal disease, look for fractured or abscessed teeth, oral tumors, bite abnormalities, or other potential problems.
- 3) Scaling-calculus and tartar are removed both above and below the gum line.
- 4) Polishing-microscopic scratches are polished out of the enamel, giving teeth a smoother surface and helping to prevent calculus from adhering to the teeth when brushed regularly.
- 5) Application of **OraVet** gel to teeth surfaces to reduce the accumulation of bacteria and tartar.
- 6) Extractions-We understand that extracting teeth can be traumatic for owners as well as their pets. We only extract teeth that need to be removed. If the tooth has a cavity, is broken, or is no longer held firmly in place by surrounding bone it is painful and needs to be extracted. For pain control, we now offer clients the option of using local anesthesia prior to extractions (similar to a human dentist using Novocaine prior to major dental work). Please see the following page for more information.
- 7) An antibiotic injection is given and your pet may have antibiotics to go home.
- 8) A finger brush sample kit is sent home at no charge.

### What about the risks of anesthesia?

Many of our dental patients are geriatric. To minimize anesthetic risks, a thorough physical examination and lab work are performed prior to anesthesia. Your pet's medical record will be reviewed and all pertinent factors will be taken into account when selecting the anesthetic drugs used. We use the safest drugs available for anesthesia, and take

great care to make each animal's anesthesia as risk-free as possible. A heart/blood pressure/oxygen sensor is connected to each animal and their vital signs are monitored throughout the entire procedure. All patients have an intravenous catheter and fluids during the anesthesia to maintain blood pressure and hydration; this decreases the risk of complications and speeds recovery time.

**What if my pet's teeth don't look dirty?**

We love to clean teeth in healthy mouths; it shortens time under anesthesia and lessens the chances of your pet needing extractions in the future. Dental cleanings are an excellent idea for pets of any age; we can even do them at the same time that they are going to be spayed or neutered.

**In summary, we feel that proper dental care is an extremely important part of your pet's overall health, and by taking care of your pet's teeth you can help them live healthier, happier lives. Please feel free to speak to a staff member if you have any questions.**