

Sounds like your pet needs a dental.....

A dental procedure has been recommended for your pet following a mouth examination. At the very least this will involve a short general anaesthetic, and a dental scale & polish. In many cases dental x-rays will be performed. In cases of more advanced periodontal disease complex surgical extractions may be required.

Price estimates for the procedure will vary with the grade and severity of your pet's dental disease.

Grading dental disease - what does it mean and what will it cost to treat?

Healthy teeth & Gums

Healthy teeth have minimal plaque – enamel remains white and the gums are healthy. This is usually restricted to young dog and cats. To maintain healthy teeth and gums, a commitment to daily dental home care is required (see [dental preventive care handout](#)).



Grade 1 dental disease

Affected teeth have plaque (soft accumulation of bacteria aka pus) and tartar (calcified plaque – also called calculus) resulting in mild bad breath. A preventative dental scale (removal of plaque and calculus) & polish followed by daily dental homecare is required at this early stage to prevent your pet's mouth developing into painful grade 3 & 4 dental disease. A routine scale & polish should be repeated at least annually to maintain optimal dental hygiene.



Grade 2 dental disease

In addition to plaque and tartar, inflammation and swelling of the gums develops and moderate bad breath.



Treatment Plan - Prophylactic scale & polish Grade 1 and 2

Small dogs and cats \$ 405 (scale & polish alone)

\$682 (with blood test and dental x-rays)

Large dogs \$452 (scale & polish alone)

\$729 (with blood test and dental x-rays)

Note - The smaller estimates above are for basic Grade 1-2 dental procedures and do not include pre-anaesthetic blood testing, antibiotics, surgical extractions, pain relief, or dental x-rays (\$156) (dental x-rays are the only way to rule out dental disease that you cannot see beneath the gum line – see later). Pre-anaesthetic blood tests (\$121) are recommended before all anaesthetics – ask for our [pre-anaesthetic blood testing handout](#) or speak with our staff for more information).



Grade 3 dental disease

Periodontal disease is established. Gums are infected, receding, deep pockets develop and the gums may bleed. Pus discharge develops, hair and food accumulate in pockets and there is severe bad breath. Whilst these pets may still be eating well – they are suffering dental pain.



Grade 4 dental disease

Periodontal disease is advanced. Significant pus accumulation results in infection and rotting away of the jaw bone. This then results in mobile teeth, loss of teeth, bleeding gums and severe bad breath. Whilst these pets may be eating well – they have been suffering pain for months or years.

Treatment Plan – Grade 3 & 4 mouths - Scale & Polish, full mouth x-rays, surgical extractions, antibiotics and pain relief
From \$800-\$1800 plus pre-anaesthetic blood testing for \$121.

The importance of dental procedures for the welfare of your pet.

Don't be misled, all too frequently we hear.....

"My dog/cat is still eating OK.....so they can't be in pain"wrong!

If you google – mouth pain in dogs and cats - you will find a list of signs including inappetence, weight loss, drooling, pawing at the mouth etc. This is all true – but if your pet has developed these signs.....they have been suffering a painful mouth for months or years. This is so unnecessary and completely treatable. If a person has dental pain – they usually suffer in silence but will quickly seek out a dentist to end their pain, rather than go off their food and get skinny! Your pet can't ask for help – they have no choice but to keep eating to stay alive regardless of how much pain they are in.

"It's normal for a dog/cat to have bad breath"wrong!

Odour comes from plaque producing bacteria. Colonies of bacteria are referred to as pus. If you can smell your pet's breath – he/she has dental disease. Bad breath is not normal!

You may ask - Why such a big price range to clean your pet's teeth?

Whilst every effort is made to give you an accurate estimate at the time of consultation, the extent of periodontal disease in a pet's mouth cannot be determined until after a pet is anaesthetised, tartar removed, gums probed for deep pockets and x-rays taken.

Beneath tartar we may be lucky and find a beautiful healthy tooth. In many cases however we find teeth requiring extraction - fractures, bone loss, exposed tooth roots and resorptive lesions (where the enamel has eroded away exposing the nerve of the tooth – much like painful cavities in people).

Whilst a loose tooth (in a grade 3 or 4 mouth) sitting in a rotting jaw bone may take only a minute to remove, a fractured tooth found in a healthier mouth has up to 3 tooth roots which may be much longer than the visible crown and is well anchored within an intact jaw bone. These can take a long time to surgically extract safely. The more teeth requiring extraction - the longer the procedure will take. The older your pet is - the more likely that extractions will be required.

The importance of dental x-rays.....

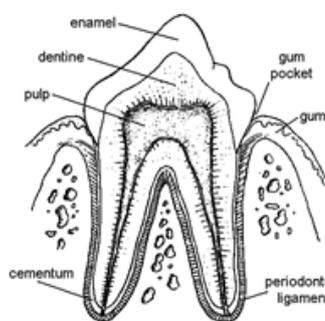
Only x-rays allow us to see what is happening beneath the gum and within the jaw bone. Dental x-rays may disclose a painful abscess around a tooth root, fractured tooth roots, resorptive enamel lesions beneath the gum line or even a fractured jaw. X-rays also let us know how to go about the extraction – particularly in cats. If tooth roots are turning into bone we don't need to spend additional anaesthetic time (which ultimately costs more money) digging out a tooth root – we can simply amputate the crown and suture closed the gum (resulting in a shorter safer anaesthetic for your cat).

Without x-rays the health of what lies beneath the gum is unknown.

Tooth root abscess

Fractured jaw pre-surgery

Tooth Resorption



Complex dentals and unexpected increases in cost

If it is likely that the time required for unexpected extractions will result in the cost exceeding the estimate given, owners will be contacted for their approval to continue. In some cases where the number or complexity of extractions necessitates a lengthy potentially unhealthy anaesthetic, a second procedure may be scheduled at another time (Stage 2). Delaying some extractions may suit owners needing to budget for increased costs determined following scaling and radiographs.