

West Central Veterinary Services

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DOES YOUR PET HAVE BAD BREATH?

How old is your pet? Can you imagine how you would feel if you went that many years without ever brushing your teeth? Pets also need routine dental care and your pet is probably in need of a dental exam and cleaning.

Warning Signs:

The most common warning signs of dental disease are bad breath and drooling. Also, some pets will show signs of pain when they eat dry food. If your pet allows you to look inside their mouth, you may also notice red gums and chunks of plaque.

The Effects of Dental Disease:

Your pet's bad breath is caused by plaque buildup that starts as soon as your pet begins eating solid food as a puppy or kitten. This plaque is a combination of food, saliva, and bacteria. The bacteria excrete a toxic waste product, which starts to break down the gum tissue. As the bacteria infection continues, a foul odor may be noticed. The bacteria enter the bloodstream and can also cause harm to other organs such as the liver, kidneys, and heart.

Professional Dental Cleaning:

The plaque on your pet's teeth becomes hard and can only be removed with professional scaling. The dental procedure involves placing your pet under general anesthesia so the teeth can be scaled and polished. Scaling is a procedure in which ultrasonic waves are used to break the chunks of plaque off the teeth. The teeth are then polished to smooth the surface of the teeth, which will help aid the prevention of plaque formation on the teeth. A registered veterinary technician will be responsible for performing the dental cleaning and a doctor will pull any teeth that are loose or fractured and need to be removed.

Dental Cleaning Day:

Your pet will need to be dropped off at the clinic the morning of the dental and will be ready to go home that same evening. Please make sure to withhold food after 10 p.m. the evening before the procedure.

Home Dental Care:

Once your pet's teeth have been professionally cleaned, it is important to brush them at home. This will help prevent the buildup of plaque. Human toothpaste can upset your pet's stomach, so only toothpaste made especially for pets should be used. You can get this veterinary toothpaste from our clinic or at some pet stores. There is also pet food (such as Hills T/D), treats, and water or food additives which act to help prevent plaque buildup.

Please contact us if you have any questions involving dental care or wish to schedule an appointment for your pet to have a dental cleaning.