

devoted vets

for your animal's life!



for your pet's health

12 Normanby St, Warragul, 3820 Phone: 5623 2525

Winter 2014

**Focus on
pet's teeth:**

**The gold
standard -
a fresh breath
and clean,
white, shiny
teeth!**

**Treating dental
disease in
pets**

**Prevention is
better than
cure!**

**Free dental
check-up with
our devoted
nurses**

Claira's corner

Keep your pet's breath fresh and its teeth white and shiny!

Puppies and kittens are born with beautiful white and shiny teeth. Like humans, they lose their first or "milk" teeth as they grow up, and by about six months of age get clean, white and shiny permanent teeth and fresh breath.



However pets' teeth may not stay clean, white and shiny, and unfortunately, dental disease is one of the most common disorders in both dogs and cats. The two main causes of this problem are soft foods and not enough chewing.

This combination leads to food particles, salts from saliva and bacteria forming hard deposits or "plaque" on the surface of pet's teeth. The teeth become yellow, then brown.

Over time plaque continues to build up until it begins to irritate and inflame the gum next to the tooth. When the gum becomes inflamed, it's red instead of pink, and bleeds easily. This condition is called gingivitis.

As further plaque builds up, it provides a site for bacteria and food residues to lie between the tooth and the gum, infecting the gum. This leads to bad breath! Very unpleasant!

With time, bacterial poisons damage the gum and it begins to recede back up the tooth, leaving the roots of the teeth exposed. Continued infection can lead to pain and loss of teeth.

Unfortunately problems don't stop there. The bacterial poisons are absorbed into the pet's bloodstream and deteriorate the health of the kidneys, liver and heart valves, potentially leading to illness and even death.

This progression of disease does not have to happen, OR if it has already taken place, modern veterinary dental treatment can return your pet's mouth to health. It's breath can become fresh again, and the teeth polished to be clean, white and shiny.

So let's look first at prevention: Modern pet diets are often too soft and do not promote chewing. We advise dry food rather than canned food, raw chicken wings and necks for both cats and dogs, and raw hide "bones" for dogs. If fresh meat is fed, the chunks should be very large to promote chewing.

We do not advise feeding bones to dogs as they can shatter teeth, cause internal blockages (leading to surgery) and constipation.



"Open widely!"

Dental checks are a routine part of maintaining your pet's health. We check dental health at every annual vaccination, and at every senior check up. Dental disease tends to get worse with age, but in extreme cases, it can be present in one to two year old pets!

If dietary adjustment fails to keep your pet's teeth clean, fully balanced dental dry food diets such as Royal Canin dental, Hills t/d or Vet Essentials are specifically manufactured to clean teeth as the pet eats. In our opinion, Vet Essentials is the very best dry food available for both cats and dogs.

What if dental disease has taken place? Dental treatment requires a day stay at the Clinic and a full general anaesthetic. The teeth are cleaned with an ultrasonic scaler and polished with a special toothpaste to restore their original high gloss, smooth surface.

Teeth with exposed roots are often removed as plaque readily builds up on the surface of the roots.

Pain relief and antibiotics are prescribed as required. The good news is, inflamed and infected gums rapidly return to normal. The bad breath disappears.

We routinely advise a blood screen prior to anaesthetic to check your pet's internal health, and intravenous fluids during anaesthetic to ensure a safer, smoother procedure and recovery.

In the week following dental treatment, we recheck a pet's mouth to make sure recovery is progressing well. Dietary advice is included at this stage to prevent recurrence of dental disease.

If you notice your pet has bad breath or brown discoloration or build up on its teeth, phone the Clinic on 5623 2525 for a **free dental check up** with one of our devoted veterinary nurses.

Claira's corner



"Shock and horror! Some foreigner called Charlie has invaded my bed. MY BED! As you can tell by my body language, I'm not happy. Not happy, Jan! I guess she has become a bit of an acquaintance, staying in the clinic until she finds a home, but really... What's a girl like me supposed to DO?" (Answers can be emailed to ME, Claira, at info@devotedvets.com.au)



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vets**

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Email: info@devotedvets.com.au Website: www.devotedvets.com.au

Clinic Hours

Monday and Thursday: 8am to 7 pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 8am to 5pm

Saturday: 9am to 12 noon