



Animal Dental Care

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SMALL ANIMAL DENTISTRY: FIFTY KEY QUESTIONS

Module 3 Periodontal Therapy

15. What is a professional dental cleaning and assessment and what are its benefits?

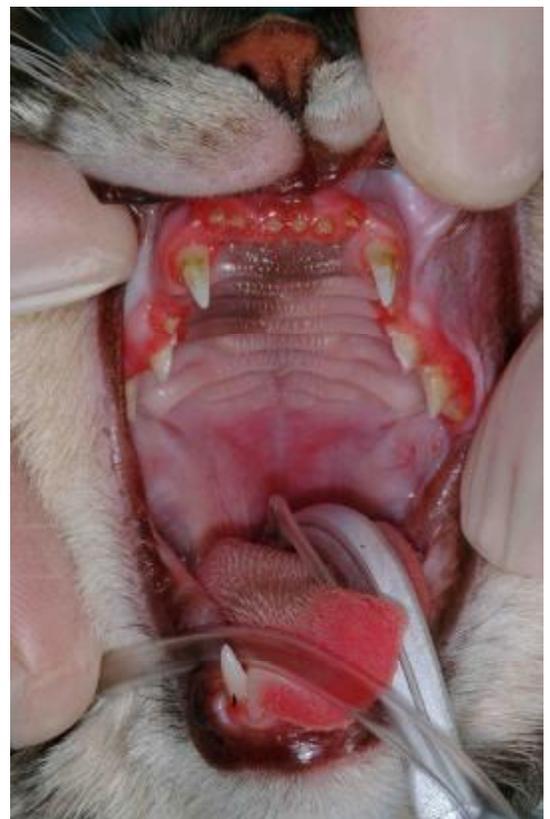
- periodontal therapy includes non-surgical and surgical procedures done “around the teeth” to help preserve dentition
- a professional dental cleaning and assessment is a non-surgical periodontal therapy
- a professional dental cleaning and assessment is also referred to as a complete dental prophylaxis, a dental “prophy”, or an oral hygiene procedure
- its purpose is to remove plaque and calculus on tooth surfaces both supragingivally and subgingivally, to inhibit plaque adherence to each tooth, and to promote a healthy periodontium
- a professional dental cleaning and assessment includes a detailed oral examination and charting which permits accurate diagnosis of dental and oral disease, in order to direct treatment and preventive care for a healthy, functional, pain-free oral cavity

- a professional dental cleaning and assessment may help prevent chronic infectious disease of vital organ diseases and help increase life expectancy
- there is evidence from human dental research that there is a greater risk of cardiac disease and a shorter life expectancy the more severe the periodontal disease
- it is hypothesized the same is true for dogs and cats, that the more advanced the periodontal disease, the greater the bacteremic showering of vital organs with pathogenic bacteria
- this may cause chronic cardiac, pulmonary, renal, and hepatic disease, and shorten life expectancy for dogs and cats

16. When is a professional dental cleaning and assessment indicated?

- a professional dental cleaning and assessment is indicated when there is moderate to marked gingivitis (Gingival Indices: 2 – 3/3)
- in some patients there may be a hypersensitivity to or an immunoincompetence to plaque bacteria and toxins, in which case there is only plaque present and little to no calculus has formed

Example of Gingival Indices ranging from 2 to 3 in a 10 month old female domestic shorthair cat with juvenile gingivitis.



- the other indication for a professional dental cleaning and assessment is moderate to marked plaque and calculus accumulation (Plaque Indices and Calculus Indices 2 - 3/3) with or without the presence of gingival recession and root exposure



Example of Calculus Indices ranging from 2 to 3 in a 3 year old female spayed Shetland sheepdog.

- a third indication for a professional dental cleaning and assessment is when there is gingival hyperplasia

Example of gingival hyperplasia in a 5 year old male neutered Bernese mountain dog. The periodontal probe is measuring a 9 mm pseudopocket mesial to 104.



- generalized gingival hyperplasia may occur as a genetic problem as seen in boxers and Springer spaniels, but is promoted by plaque bacteria
- gingival hyperplasia may also occur for individual teeth with higher plaque indices