

## Canine and Feline Periodontal Disease

*Statistically 80% of dogs and 70% of cats show signs of periodontal disease by age 3, and 28% of cats can develop painful resorptive lesions during their lifetime.*

**Stage One:** Soft plaque builds up on the surfaces of the teeth. At this time the plaque can be removed by brushing, chewing on dental items, rinses or a specific diet. If it is not removed, mineral deposits from the saliva will precipitate in the plaque and form dental calculus (a hard substance that is known as tartar). Bacteria continue to grow, multiply and invade the surrounding soft tissues causing gingivitis and red inflamed gums.

Canine



Feline



**Stage Two:** As the dental calculus accumulates, it wedges the gums away from the tooth and allows food, debris, and bacteria to enter below the gum line. More tartar builds up and the cycle repeats with increasing inflammation of the gums. At this time, the only thing to stop the periodontal disease is to have a veterinarian scale the calculus off and return home on a preventative plan.

Canine



Feline



**Stage Three:** If the plaque and calculus formation is not interrupted pockets of bacteria, debris and inflammatory material will accumulate and form pockets of pus along the tooth and to root at times. This will cause further destruction of tissues surrounding the tooth allowing more debris to become packed below the gum line. Inflammation and bacteria begin to cause discomfort and bad breathe.

Canine



Feline



**Stage Four:** As the disease process continues, more and more toxic debris and inflammation accumulate causing extensive tissue death. Roots become infected abscessed and rot. Eventually the thin wall of bone that surrounds the tooth begins eroding away. Pain can be severe at this stage and the pet may be reluctant to eat hard foods. Cats will sometimes growl or hiss as they try to eat.

Canine



Feline



**Stage Five:** As the bone and surrounding dental tissues die, the tooth loses its attachment, loosens and eventually falls out.

