



Love your pet... love your vet

Dental care for your pet

Studies have shown that only **4 out of 100 dental problems in pets are detected by their owners** and brought to a veterinary surgery for this reason alone. The other 96% are detected by your veterinary surgeon at health checks or when your pet is taken to the vets for another problem.

It is thought that **over 7.6 million cats and dogs in the UK are suffering from undiagnosed toothache** – by the age of three years, 7 out of 10 will have some dental disease.

90% of cat and dog owners know that their pet's teeth need as much care as their own but only 3 out of 10 owners actually have any oral hygiene routine for their pet.

Animals do not express pain in the same way we do. By the time it is obvious to you that your pet has a sore mouth the problem will have been there for a very long time. If your pet stopped eating purely because of dental pain it would starve - they cannot contact the dentist and request an appointment like us when this starts to happen!

Left untreated, in addition to the pain and discomfort your pet experiences from dental disease, there is the possibility of other complications with the kidneys, liver and heart, particularly in elderly animals that may have underlying problems already.

Dental disease is 100% preventable – all that is needed is good home dental care from the start. Once dental problems have developed, they are incurable, and all you can do is 'manage' them and reduce the discomfort for your pet.

If you feel that your pet has a dental problem Hillside offer **free dental check-ups** with a veterinary nurse available as an appointment.

DENTAL WORK ON YOUR PET AT HILLSIDE VET CENTRE

Dental work on pets is always carried out under general anaesthetic. At Hillside Veterinary Centre we use modern anaesthetic agents in a safe combination, as well as ensuring that your pet remains as pain free as possible. If we are concerned about your pet's general health we may recommend a blood test and/ or a 'drip'

(intravenous fluids) during the operation to make the procedure as safe as possible. We tend to use intravenous fluids routinely in all our elderly patients as it is well proven to improve anaesthetic safety and recovery rates. All patients will receive a full pre-operative health check after they have been admitted for the day and before an anaesthetic is given.

By law veterinary nurses are allowed to descale and polish teeth but they are not allowed to undertake any dental surgery or extractions. We stick rigidly to this at Hillside and so all dental surgery is undertaken by one of our vets.

The standard of veterinary dentistry can vary enormously between veterinary surgeries, but all dental work at Hillside Veterinary Centre is undertaken **using modern dental equipment and techniques, much as you would see at your own dentist.** Our veterinary surgeons have all attended advanced study courses in dentistry to ensure they are using the most up-to-date techniques and treatments.

Following dentistry, your pet will be discharged by one of our nurses later the same day. They will discuss all aspects of the dental work undertaken, explain any medication that your pet has been given and show you a dental chart of your pet's mouth to illustrate what the problems were and what work has been done. Our clients find this particularly helpful as many pets will not let you look for yourself! We will also send your pet home with a complimentary tin of soft food for that evening.

The following week there is **a free appointment with your veterinary surgeon to ensure all is well and that the mouth is healing properly.** This also enables you to ask any further questions. At the same time you will have **a free nurse appointment, where we will discuss what you can do to prevent further dental disease.** This includes tooth-brushing, special dental diets, and appropriate chews/toys etc. Remember prevention is better than cure!

Following dental work our computer system will generate a reminder after 3 months to offer you the chance to have your pets teeth checked for free.

Some **Pet Insurance** companies will cover for work that is associated with dental disease; it's always worth contacting your insurance company to discuss this with them.

If you have any further questions, want to discuss any of the above, or would like an estimate for dental work to be undertaken please feel free to speak to our vets or nurses at any time.

Disclaimer: The information and advice contained in this handout is for general information only. It is not intended to be a substitute for a veterinary examination and/or specific treatment or advice. You should always seek advice from your veterinary surgeon.

**Hillside Veterinary Centre 116 Wareham Road Corfe Mullen Wimborne BH21 3LH
t: 01202 698899 f: 01202 657400 e: mail@hillsidevets.co.uk**