

## **Inver Grove Heights Animal Hospital**

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### **Your Pet's Dental Cleaning**

Your veterinarian has recommended that your pet receive a professional teeth cleaning also known as a dental prophylaxis. This cleaning helps maintain your pet's health by removing the dental tartar that builds-up on teeth over time. If left untreated, the tartar may progress to cover much or all of the tooth surface which in turn leads to periodontal disease (gum recession, infection, pain, and tooth loss). Advanced dental disease can even affect other organ systems such as the heart and kidneys.

The teeth cleaning procedure is a service routinely performed at Inver Grove Heights Animal Hospital. Your pet will be admitted to the hospital for the majority of the day as general anesthesia is needed. Your pet will sleep comfortably through the procedure. This allows for a thorough examination of the mouth, removal of the tartar by ultrasonic scaling of the teeth (both on the surface and below the gum-line), and then a complete polishing. We also have the ability to perform digital dental x-rays of the mouth to identify underlying dental disease. If tooth roots are affected, digital x-rays are used to determine if additional therapy or procedures are needed. Sometimes it may be necessary to extract the teeth involved to alleviate discomfort. The fees involved in tooth extraction and digital x-rays are based on the number and type of teeth involved. We try to be as accurate as possible when estimating the costs involved before hand, but may not be able to completely assess the scope of treatment needed until the pet is asleep and the veterinarian can examine the mouth more thoroughly. We will do our best to contact you by telephone in order to keep you apprised of any additional findings during the dental procedure.

Due to the need for general anesthesia, we recommend your pet have some routine blood work performed before the procedure to screen for possible underlying problems. This pre-anesthetic blood testing helps minimize inherent risks associated with any general anesthesia. The blood work may be performed the day of the dental cleaning or even several days in advance if more convenient for you. If any abnormalities are detected by this blood testing, you will be notified by the attending veterinarian who will be able to explain what these results mean to the health of your pet.

After your pet's teeth have been cleaned, home dental care can help maintain oral health. Brushing the teeth with specially formulated pet toothpaste and a small toothbrush, a finger toothbrush, or gauze can be effective. There is also special food available for dogs and cats prone to dental disease called T/D (tooth diet) produced by Hill's Science Diet. This is a prescription diet available only through veterinary clinics and can be especially helpful if you are unable to brush your pet's teeth.

If you have further questions, please feel free to call our office or visit our website at [www.ighvet.com](http://www.ighvet.com). In the resources section you will find many medical articles pertaining to your pet's dental health.