

The Professional Dental Cleaning

What to Expect

Please do not give your pet any food after 10pm the night before the scheduled dental procedure. Do allow water until they leave home in the morning. If they are on a consistent medication, do give that with grape-sized bit of treat or food if needed to administer the medication. If your pet is diabetic, please call ahead for insulin instructions. You may bring your pet in to be admitted for the procedure between 8am and 8:45am.

The overall procedure will be timed according to the day's caseload, doctor availability, and patient status. There are multiple steps to the process, several of which occur before anesthesia is started. The pet will have a pre-anesthetic evaluation, a light sedative, and an IV catheter will be placed. The catheter is to permit IV fluids to support your pet during anesthesia as well as to provide intravenous access should any IV medications be needed. After anesthesia is induced, the visual oral evaluation begins, followed by full mouth dental x-rays. Much of the tooth is below the gumline, so these radiographs are essential to determining the health of the teeth. The dental cleaning is performed after the evaluation and involves ultrasonic and hand scaling to remove tartar followed by polishing to smooth the enamel and make it more difficult for plaque to attach. Any specific dental treatments are also performed with the dental assessment.

If diseased or damaged teeth are identified during the x-rays and evaluation, we will contact you at the number provided at admission to discuss the treatment options. There are often multiple options and those are not decisions we can, or should, make for you, so we will call to discuss this with you. Your pet will be under general anesthesia at this time, so we need to reach someone quickly to discuss the concerns noted and treatments that may be appropriate. If we cannot reach anyone within ten (10) minutes, we will complete the planned procedure and awaken your pet without addressing any specific problems noted. We will not perform extractions, root planing, periodontal medicants, bonded sealants or other measures without confirmation from you (or a designated responsible party). We can schedule the treatment for those issues at a later date but anesthesia will be required a second time which will have an additional cost.

We will also contact you when your pet is awake and in recovery, which could be anytime from 1pm to 4pm. We do typically wait until they are sitting up in recovery before calling you with an anticipated pick-up time.

We do occasionally discover very advanced dental pathology that requires a significant number of extractions for the pet's health and comfort. If the number and severity warrant it, we may recommend staging the extractions into two separate procedures. The purpose is to reduce the anesthetic time and to allow the pet to heal from the first



procedure before performing the second. Most often, we will perform the extractions needed on one side of the mouth and allow that area to heal and normalize, and then return in 2-3 weeks and perform the necessary extractions on the opposite side. This allows them comfort with chewing on one side while the other is healing and breaks the anesthesia into two shorter procedures rather than one very lengthy procedure. This is recommended on a case-by-case basis.

Your pet may be bright and excited to see you, but become more sleepy once they are home and relaxed. This is very normal following even a light anesthesia. Feed 1/3 to 1/2 their usual dinner in case they have any nausea from the anesthesia (this is fairly uncommon). For more details about what to expect in the immediate post-anesthesia and dental period, please see our Post-Anesthesia Home Care Dental Information [here](#).

With the teeth cleaned and gum disease addressed, this is the perfect time to start a dental home care regimen if you haven't already. Please see the information sheet on dental home care products [here](#) to help keep your pet's teeth clean longer between professional cleanings.

If you have any questions about your pet's planned dental care, please do not hesitate to call us (727-785-6524).