

Welcome to Main Street Animal Hospital's seasonal newsletter, your quarterly source for pet health news, updates from around the hospital, savings opportunities, and staff profiles.



Featured Article: Dental Health

February is Veterinary Dental Health Month. In the same way that it's important to regularly visit your doctor *and* your dentist, our pets also need to have regular attention given to their teeth. Periodontal disease is the most common condition that occurs in adult dogs and cats, but the good news is that it is often preventable.

As an owner, the first signs you'll be able to detect are bad breath and discolored teeth. Advanced disease may lead to loose teeth, drooling, bleeding, or possibly even loss of appetite and weight. Importantly, these are all symptoms, not causes, of the underlying disease. At its core, most dental disease is caused by the action of bacteria. Just like in humans, it starts with bacterial growth on the teeth, which can generate a layer of plaque that will eventually form into hardened tartar. The spread is not limited by the gums, and when plaque and tartar reach areas around the root of the tooth (underneath the gum line), complications can occur. This may even result in the tooth having to be removed.

If you and your veterinarian decide treatment is in order, it is most commonly done under anesthesia, which allows the veterinarian to do a thorough cleaning of all the teeth even below the gum line – something that is impossible while the animal is "awake." If you'd like to do a little anesthesia-free maintenance at home, you can use a child-size toothbrush or a finger toothbrush and specially formulated veterinary toothpaste. Brush your pet's teeth just like you would yours, and be sure to get beneath those cheeks and jowls!



Did You Know?

We offer a discount for dental cleanings in the month of February! If your pet has pre-anesthetic blood work with a dental cleaning in February you get 10% off. Please talk to one of our doctors to see if you and your pet would benefit from this special!



Ethylene Glycol Toxicity

With cold weather upon us, it's a good time to remember that **ethylene glycol**, also known as **antifreeze** or **engine coolant**, is extremely toxic to animals. Increasing the danger is the fact that ethylene glycol tastes sweet, which can attract pets and wild animals.

This winter, be sure to keep antifreeze out of pets' reach and to clean up spills immediately. *If you suspect a pet may have consumed ethylene glycol, call us immediately.*