



## SILVER LAKE ANIMAL PRACTICE

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### Dentistry Information

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Dental disease is most common disease in dogs and cats. Nearly 70% of pets have some form of dental disease by the time they are 3 years old. Accumulation of tartar on the teeth contributes to gum recession around the base of the tooth. Infection soon follows, gingivitis develops and the gums recede. The infection then spreads into the tooth socket which results in pain and eventually tooth loss. In addition, the bacteria are absorbed into the blood stream and carried to other organs. Heart valve infection, kidney and liver disease are frequently due to bad teeth.

Dental care begins at home by feeding a dry food. Brushing your pet's teeth is very helpful and will help them live up to 2 years longer. If you can't brush your pet's teeth you can give chews and toys that are designed to help clean their teeth. Even with good home care, regular dental cleanings are necessary to remove tartar and prevent painful gingivitis and tooth loss. We can help you develop a home care dental program that will work for you and your pet.

A routine dental cleaning in pets is very similar to what a human dentist does to clean our teeth. The main difference is that we have to anesthetize dogs and cats to clean their teeth. Please see the surgery section for more information about anesthesia.

A dental procedure begins by examining the teeth and mouth to evaluate damage and areas of concern. Next, the teeth are cleaned above and BELOW the gum line. We use a combination of hand scaling and special dental equipment to clean the teeth. After the teeth have been cleaned, they are polished to help reduce future tartar build-up.