



FEAR FREE

Taking the pet out of petrified.

SHARPE'S

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DENTAL DISEASE AND YOUR PET

- Amanda, CVT

By the age of 2 years old up to 80% of our dogs and cats have dental disease, making it one of the most prominent ailments we see. Unlike people, dogs and cats are unable to brush their own teeth thus allowing for the accumulation of plaque and tartar. Tartar is the buildup of bacteria and minerals which will eventually cause gingivitis and infection throughout the body. Plaque takes as little as 24 hours to form. At your pet's yearly physical, the veterinarian will check the health of his/her teeth and gums. Special care will be taken to look for obvious signs of disease including foul odors, loose teeth, fractured teeth, and infection along the gumline.

When an oral evaluation and treatment is recommended, your pet will be placed under general anesthesia. Each tooth will be examined carefully by a skilled technician. He or she will also be checking for loose or fractured teeth, missing or discolored teeth and obvious signs of infection. The quality of bone surrounding each tooth will also be noted by measuring the depth of each gingival sulcus. Any visual loss of tissue around tooth roots will also be documented. Tartar is removed with an ultrasonic scaler and each tooth is polished to keep the surface smooth.

Not all disease is obvious though. Sixty percent of the tooth is hidden under the gumline. Based on the American Animal Hospital Association standards, we recommend dental radiographs for each patient undergoing an evaluation. Using digital technology, this allows us to examine the roots of each tooth efficiently. The doctor will evaluate the percentage of bone surrounding each root and the quality of structures in and around each tooth. These include the periodontal ligament and root canal containing the nerve and blood supply. Root changes are often found on radiographs that otherwise wouldn't have been noted. These findings will be compared to physical findings and treatment will be recommended accordingly. This gives us an opportunity to treat issues that would otherwise be very painful or potentially detrimental to your pet.

What about "anesthesia-free" dental cleanings? The American Veterinary Dental College does not recommend dental cleanings without anesthesia because they do not allow cleaning or inspection below the gumline, where most dental disease occurs, and can result in injury to the pet or the person performing the procedure. (<https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/Pet-Dental-Care.aspx>)

FEAR FREE 201: IN THE EXAM ROOM

- Ericha, CVT

As a Fear Free Certified Practice, we are here to alleviate your pet's fear, anxiety or stress during their appointments. We accomplish this by using a combination of Fear Free techniques. Some of these you may have noticed or have even needed for your pet.

As soon as you and your pet arrive at our hospital to your appointment, our office coordinators will talk in calming tones to you and your pet. Our lobby also has calming music playing and this type of music follows your pet throughout their visit. Upon check in, we will offer you either a bandana for canines or a blanket for felines. These items have a species-specific calming pheromone on it which will accompany your pet throughout their appointment. We will then be bringing you and your pet back to an exam room. If one is unavailable, they will politely ask you to wait in our species-specific waiting area.

Once in the exam room a technician or assistant will begin by entering, talking calmly to your pet and also offering a wide variety of treats. If your pet has an allergy please let us know and we will do our best to find a treat that works for them! Calming music will also begin playing in the background. During the exam, the staff will use a slow, considerate approach when meeting your pet. When we need to touch your pet to complete the exam or treatment, we will work into a gentle control. Repeatedly taking the hand on and off your pet can cause them to startle each time. Therefore, we use a "gradient touch" which is always trying to keep a hand on your pet. Treats will be offered as well, which creates an even more positive experience.

Although we may try all the things mentioned above, sometimes we are unable to complete treatments or procedures as the pet's fear, anxiety or stress becomes too high. Your pet's doctor may prescribe a PVP or "pre visit pharmaceutical" to help decrease their high stress levels. At this point, we will ask to have your pet come back for another appointment while on the medication. Pets may even need Social Visits which are a non-invasive way to help create positive experience in the hospital.

Last but certainly not least, one of the most important parts of this equation to making your pet's veterinary visit the least stressful as possible, is you the owner! This starts at home, in the car and at the hospital. Some tips you can do at home: a couple hours before the appointment start with a calming pheromone, we recommend Feliway for cats and Adaptil for dogs. If you have a cat, keep the cat carrier out in your cat's everyday life (don't keep in a closet when not in use). Play calming classical music and pheromones in the car while driving here, both cats and dogs respond well to this. Our pets also feed off of our energy. Using a calm voice, soft motions and pets will help to calm your pet. Together we can take the "pet" out of "petrified" and put the "treat" into "treatment"!

Please remember that the client parking lot is on the west side of the building



HOLIDAY HUGS WRAP UP

- Sarah, Client Marketing Coordinator

We've collected an outstanding amount of donations for local pet shelters this holiday season. Along with received items in need, our total dollar amount collected is over \$2,000. This has been divided up and delivered to Specialty Purebred Cat Rescue, Safe Harbor Humane Society, Animeals and Fellow Mortals. This couldn't have been done without your help and support. The staff at Care Animal Hospital of Pleasant Prairie wish you a happy holiday season and a safe new year.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Melissa Feltes, DVM

Emergencies come in many forms. Each situation requires different measures to keep your pets safe, so the best thing you can do for yourself and your pets is to be prepared. Here are some steps to consider before an emergency occurs:

1. Take them with you. If it's not safe for you to stay, it's not safe for your pets. Animals left behind in a disaster can be easily injured, lost or killed. Animals turned loose to defend for themselves are likely to become victims of exposure, starvation, predators, contaminated food and water, or accidents.
2. Get a rescue alert sticker. If you are unable to take your pets or if you cannot reach your home to evacuate them, an easy to use sticker will let people know that pets are inside your home. The sticker should include the type and number of pets in your home as well as emergency contact information. Placing it near the front door will make it visible to rescue workers. If you have a sticker and ARE able to take your pets with you, marking it "evacuated" will prevent workers from searching unnecessarily.
3. Arrange for a safe haven. This may include a boarding kennel, shelter, hotel/motel that accepts pets, or friends/relatives outside of your immediate area that would be willing to take in your pet.
4. Choose designated caregivers. These are individuals that are given permission to access your home and understand your wishes in caring for your pets. They should be able to access your pet's medical records and be authorized to make medical decisions with the pet's veterinarian.
5. Prepare Emergency Supplies and traveling kits. Make sure all pets wear collars and tags with up-to-date identification information. ID tags should contain their name, phone number and urgent medical needs. Label the carrier with the same information. Microchips serve as a permanent form of identification, ensure that the contact information is kept up-to-date. Store an emergency kit close to an exit and ensure everyone in the family knows where it is. Items to consider keeping in a kit include:
 - Sturdy leashes, harnesses and carriers
 - Food, drinking water, bowls, can opener, and litterbox/litter for cats
 - Can opener
 - Plastic bags for waste disposal
 - Medical records and medications stored in a waterproof container
 - A first aid kit
 - Current photos of you with your pets in case they get lost.
 - Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, vaccinations records, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you need to board your pet.

Once you have a disaster plan and emergency kit in place, it is imperative to keep the contents up-to-date. Replace any food or water every 6 months. Keep emergency contact information and medical records current. Label the kit with the date it was last updated.

A pre-determined plan in case of a disaster will help you remain calm and think clearly. You never know when a crisis will occur, but you can prepare for the possibility.

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PREVENTING PESKY PARASITES

- **Kirstyn Heino, DVM**

Winter is here – a time when the freezing temperatures and snow make it difficult for every member of the family, pets included, endure the rigors of the outdoors. You may think the cold puts an end to the pesky fleas, ticks and heartworms that affect our pets during the spring and summer months. The big question is, “Are monthly parasite preventatives necessary during the winter months?” The answer is ...yes. Astonishingly, many parasites are not affected by the cold. At Care Animal Hospital, we recommend the use of year-round parasite prevention to help keep your pet and every member of the family safe.

So, what are parasites?

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), a parasite is “an organism that lives on or in a host and gets its food from or at the expense of its host (1).” There are hundreds, if not thousands, of parasites and they can be separated into two categories – external and internal. External parasites include fleas, ticks and ear mites. Internal parasites include heartworm, roundworms, hookworms and tapeworms. All of them can make pets ill and can put humans at risk as well.

How are parasites diagnosed?

As part of our comprehensive exams for internal and external parasites, various samples (blood and stool) may be needed. These tests allow us to choose the most appropriate treatment. Please ask members of our veterinary team about our two comprehensive blood work panels (Parasite Protection Plan and Senior Panel). Both screen for internal and external parasites.

What can I do to keep my pet safe?

There are many products available and there is no “magic” single treatment that will kill all parasites. Prevention for parasites may include a once monthly oral or topical medication that can keep them protected. The key is that it’s easier to prevent an infection than to treat one.

The facts about fleas and ticks

- Even at 30-degree temperatures lasting for up to four or five days, is enough for fleas to become active and cause problems.
- Flea eggs can live year-round (under furniture, base boards, etc.).
- Ticks are typically active in summer and fall, but when winter temperatures exceed 30 degrees, they can become active.

Tips for managing parasites

- Washing hands frequently, especially after handling, after picking up stool and administering preventative products.
- Cleaning litterboxes daily and picking up stool promptly to avoid environmental contamination.
- Washing your pet’s bedding and vacuuming routinely.
- Keeping pets away from tall or long grasses and open fields where ticks are likely to be found, including around wildlife.

Please ask a member of our veterinary team for products that may be the best fit for your pet and life style.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2017). Parasites. <<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/about.html>>

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Hours of Operation

Monday 8:00am – 7:00pm

Tuesday 8:00am – 7:00pm

Wednesday 8:00am – 7:00pm

Thursday 8:00am – 7:00pm

Friday 8:00am – 7:00pm

Saturday 8:00am – 2:00pm

Sunday 10:00am – 3:00pm