

## Dental Procedures – What you need to know

### *The Day Before*

- Please do not feed dogs or cats after 10pm the night before the procedure. They can have water available overnight but just take it up in the morning
- If your pet has been prescribed antibiotics or anti-inflammatories leading up to the procedure, please check the label to know when to give. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to call to ask.
- If your pet is on any other long term medication please call to find out whether to give a morning dose if it is due on the day of the procedure.
- If your pet is on any specific diet, please bring some along with you.

### *On The Day*

- You will have been given an appointment time to bring your pet to the surgery. This appointment is for an examination by the vet, to discuss what is likely to need doing and to discuss the estimated costs.
- The vet will need to weigh your pet and perform a physical examination
- The vet will discuss with you whether a pre-anaesthetic blood test is indicated to check basic liver and kidney function etc before going under an anaesthetic. They will also discuss with you whether intravenous fluids (“a drip”) is indicated based on anaesthetic risk category and estimated length of the procedure.

*Intravenous fluids are proven to help to improve anaesthetic safety and speed up recovery times.*

- The vet will discuss an estimated cost of the procedure with you – this can only ever be estimated as the price of dental extractions is based on the time taken to perform the extractions which can be difficult to predict. We also can never know the full extent of dental disease until we have cleaned the teeth of plaque and tartar and can fully assess the teeth beneath. Therefore, we try our best to estimate accurately and ask that you remain contactable throughout the day in case we need to contact you to discuss any changes in plan
- The vet will discuss with you the potential complications that can arise specific to your pets’ condition. For a dental procedure this may include:

During the procedure	After the procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bleeding – extraction sites/nose bleeds</li> <li>○ Root fracture/ Crown fracture</li> <li>○ Displacement of a root tip into the mandibular canal, nasal cavity or maxillary recess</li> <li>○ Soft tissue injury – oral mucosa, tongue, palate, eye</li> <li>○ Air embolism</li> <li>○ Nerve damage</li> <li>○ Jaw fracture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pain/swelling/infection</li> <li>○ Delayed healing/wound breakdown</li> <li>○ Hanging tongue</li> <li>○ Oronasal fistula</li> </ul>

Please speak to your vet if you require clarification or have any concerns regarding these potential complications.

Once the vet has discussed the procedure with you and you have read and signed the consent form, your pet will be taken through to our Prep area where they will have their bloods taken and an intravenous catheter placed. They may be given antibiotic and an anti-inflammatory pain relief injection at this stage, and then will receive an injection called a "premed" which will help your pet relax as well as providing further pain relief. They will then be allowed time to settle in to their kennel.

Dental procedures are classed as "dirty" operations and are therefore performed later in the morning after all sterile operations have finished.

Your pet will be anaesthetised through their intravenous catheter and then a tube placed into their airway which is connected to oxygen and anaesthetic gas which keeps them asleep. Once asleep a special swab is placed at the back of their mouth to prevent any liquids used during their procedure being able to pass into their airways.

Initially the teeth are all examined and cleaned to work out which may require extraction. When extractions are required, local anaesthetic is used to numb these teeth. It takes a great deal of time and skill for veterinarians to remove teeth along with all their entire roots - often the teeth need to be drilled in order to achieve this and often the gum and bone needs to be incised to be able to access the root tips to avoid fracturing. Diseased teeth may have already fractured or have weaker roots that can make this process more difficult.

Once any teeth have been extracted that need to be, the remaining teeth are inspected again and scaled using an ultrasonic scaler and then polished. The mouth is then rinsed thoroughly, the swab removed from the back of the mouth and the patient is recovered from their anaesthetic. Every patient is monitored closely by Veterinary nurses throughout recovery with regular observations recorded including body temperature, heart rate and breathing rate. Once recovered they are offered lunch and taken outside to stretch their legs. You will receive a phone call from one of our veterinary nurses to inform you that all is well and confirm the time for picking your pet up from the surgery.

At the discharge appointment you will be fully informed of exactly what procedures have been performed, medications to take home will be explained and home care discussed. A post-operative appointment will be advised on to come back to check your pets' teeth and gums and discuss home dental care to try to reduce the chances of needing further dental work.