

Dental Health Month

FORLS and CUPS

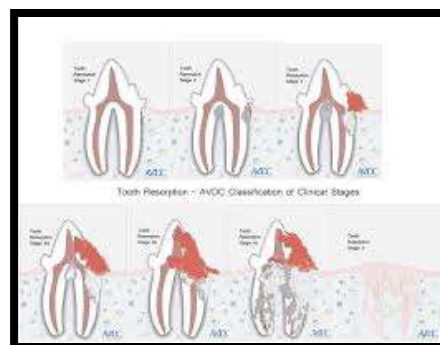
As part of maintaining our pets overall good health caring for their teeth is important. There are many different oral health care problems that can affect our pets. An oral health problem that commonly affects cats are FORLS while dogs can be affected by CUPS.

FORLS

FORLS which are now referred to tooth resorption is a dental condition seen in 20 to 60% of cats with almost 75% of those cats being over 5 years of age. Each tooth contains an inner chamber, known as the root canal, where the blood vessels, lymphatic vessels and nerves are located. These are used by the tooth to communicate with the rest of the body. Surrounding this area and accounting for the vast majority of the tooth's make up is dentin. When we see cats with tooth resorption issues the dentin is eroding away. If the dentin continues to erode away the root canal will become exposed causing pain for the cat.



The cause of tooth resorption is unknown. There are varying levels and speeds to the resorption of each tooth and there can be multiple teeth in the mouth affected. Owners typically notice that their cat is not eating as quickly, there are crumbs left in the bowl or they are swallowing the food without chewing it. The cats may also start to prefer softer foods. The only way to resolve the tooth resorption is to remove the affected tooth or teeth.



CUPS

Chronic Ulcerative Paradental Stomatitis, CUPS, is a painful disease that affects the gums, mucous membranes and tongue of dogs. This is often a long term disease and the irritation and ulcers typically occur in areas that come into contact with the teeth. The cause of this is unknown and varies based on the individual dog. In most cases it is thought that the dog's immune system is overreacting to the bacteria or plaque on the teeth. Chronic exposure to oral bacteria causes the tissue to be inflamed eventually causing ulcerations of the adjacent tissue



Signs include a large amount of swelling of the gums, lip margins and tongue. The dog's lymph nodes can be swollen as well due to the chronic nature of the disease. Owners may notice dogs that seem to have painful mouths, salivating excessively, bad breath, blood in the mouth, decreased appetite, difficult grabbing and chewing the food and weight loss. Treatment of CUPS requires a

complete dental assessment while the dog is under anesthesia. There may be teeth that need to be extracted. After the dental cleaning the owner will need to brush the dog's teeth daily because the bacteria will start to re-accumulate on the teeth within a few hours of the cleaning or brushing. Home care, including pain medications, and routine dental cleanings and evaluations are necessary. If brushing the teeth at home is not possible it may be necessary for all or most of the dog's teeth to be removed. While this may seem to be extreme the dog will typically feel much better within a few days and they are still able to eat their normal food.



Both FORLS and CUPS are important, painful and potentially debilitating condition for both cats and dogs. For information about either FORLS or CUPS feel free to call us at (920) 668-6212 or email us at info@cgvet.com.

