

Development of Periodontitis

Dental disease is the most common health problem facing dogs and cats today. By some estimates, 85% of pets over the age of four already have permanent, degenerative changes to their gums. This condition is known as periodontal disease, which can progress from mild plaque and gingivitis (inflammation of the gums) to significant inflammation and loss of teeth.



Stages of dental disease

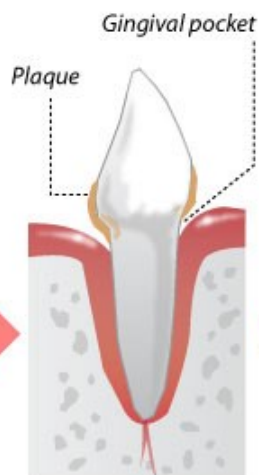


Healthy tooth and gum



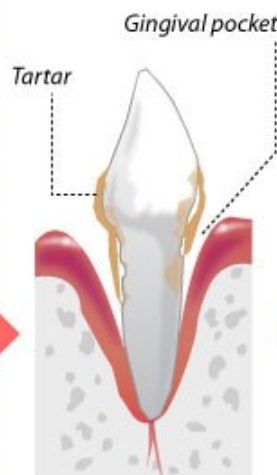
Mild plaque and gingivitis

Plaque and bacteria accumulate in gingival pockets between the teeth and gum, causing the gum to bleed and recede.



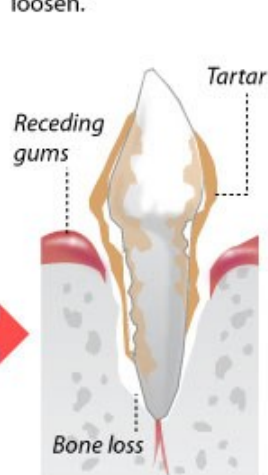
Early periodontal disease

The plaque hardens into tartar. If not treated, the pockets will get deeper with time.



Advanced periodontal disease

Untreated, the tartar can spread deeper down the teeth leading to receding gums and a receding jaw bone. The teeth begin to loosen.



Symptoms

Dental disease is painful and often associated with infection. This can result in a variety of symptoms including:

- Bad breath
- Red gums that bleed easily, and may appear pulled back from the teeth
- Drooling
- Teeth chattering
- Pus that drains from around teeth or onto the surface of the face
- Sneezing and discharge from the nose
- Poor appetite
- Dropping food from the mouth while eating
- Weight loss
- Irritability