

An open letter to my veterinary clients,

Guelph, ON

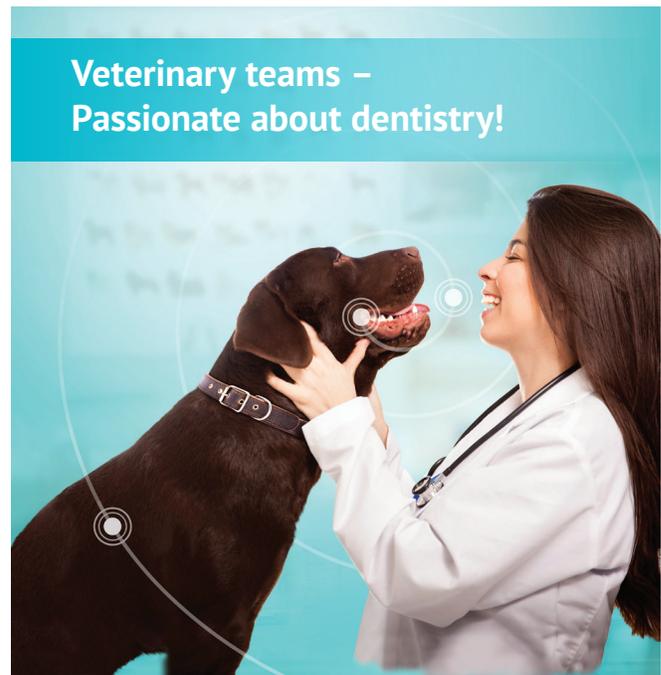
“But it’s just doggy breath” you might tell me. Or I often hear “He’s just a dog, I am not going to have his teeth cleaned!” Every time I hear a client say these statements or a variation of them I feel a twist in my gut. Let me tell you why.

“Doggy breath” isn’t a nuisance that comes with the territory of choosing to have a canine companion. That pungent smell that you catch a whiff of when your dog gets too close is an infection. This bacterial pollution does so much more than just smell bad. These nasty oral bacteria eat away at the bone, ligaments and gums surrounding the teeth. Periodontal disease is painful and we need to do something about it.

The phrase “dental cleaning” has a cosmetic air about it and for many of my clients is interpreted as a luxury rather than the necessity it is. What a dental procedure is to me is a chance to clear out infection from under the gumline, halting it in its tracks. I can take radiographs and address problem teeth, thereby relieving your pet’s oral pain.

I am also going to tell you that homecare matters! Professional dental therapy is the first step, but without preventative measures periodontal disease will rapidly set in again. The great news is we have lots of options and together we can come up with a plan that best suits your pet and family.

The best dental homecare is one that can be done on a daily basis. Tooth brushing remains the gold standard and I believe that you, yes you, can brush



your pet’s teeth. Maybe not today, but we can help you get there over the coming weeks and months. I don’t want the daunting task of tooth brushing today to set your pet up for a lifetime of dental challenges. Other popular choices are dental diets and chews. There are also water additives, wipes and dental sprays.

Early intervention and consistency are key to preventing and slowing periodontal disease. Ultimately, you are the advocate for the health of your furry family members. The time to be proactive about your pet’s oral health is now. Start the conversation with a veterinary team member today!

Sincerely, a Caring Veterinarian

For more information:

Colleen McElwain
Canadian Animal Health Institute
(519) 763-7777