

# Something to Chew On...



## What is plaque?

Plaque is what forms on your cat's teeth between brushings. It is a mixture of bacteria, minerals from saliva, and gummy food particles. Soft at first, plaque gradually hardens and turns brown. This hardened material is called tartar. As more forms, it gets up under the gums, carrying infection. In time, the teeth loosen, become painful, and eventually fall out. If you can prevent plaque from forming, or remove it while still soft, you can prevent dental problems

## Why schedule a dental cleaning (dentistry) for my cat?

Plaque eventually leads to gingivitis (infection of the gums) and periodontal (gum) disease. The infection spreads to the roots and causes cavities and eventual tooth loss, both of which are very painful. This process can take months to years to develop. Besides the impact on the mouth, the infection will enter the bloodstream and circulate to the rest of the body.

Studies have documented that pneumonia, heart, liver and kidney disease can all be traced back to a dirty mouth.

## My cat is older, and I'm concerned about the anaesthetic.

A proper dentistry involves the use of a general anaesthetic and this can cause concern for some owners.

At the Garden City Cat Hospital we routinely take thorough and careful steps to reduce the risks associated with any anaesthetic. Blood tests are recommended prior to any anaesthetic for your pet, and all cats over the age of seven must have blood work prior to any dental procedure at Garden City Cat Hospital. The results of these tests help us detect any potential problems that could occur while under the anaesthetic. (Dentistry aside, I strongly recommend yearly blood work for all cats over the age of seven; these tests will lead us to early diagnosis and prevention of potentially fatal illnesses.) These concerns can then be discussed and corrected prior to the dentistry, making dentistry and other surgeries safe for your pet. The anaesthetics we use on your cat are very safe, and our trained staff constantly monitor all patients while under the influence of any anaesthetic. The important thing to remember is that the benefits of a clean, healthy, pain-free mouth always outweigh the risks associated with the anaesthetic.

I'd be happy to discuss the above in more detail. Please contact myself or the staff for more information.

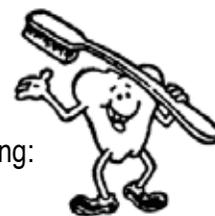
## Healthy "Choppers" Checklist

Your cat may have a medical problem that needs to be addressed if he/she shows any signs of the following:



- Bad breath/yellow stains;
- Redness at the gumline;
- Dropping food while eating;
- Jaw twitching while eating;
- Drop in appetite/reluctance to eat;
- Weight loss.

If you checked 'yes' to any of the above, it is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** that you see Dr. Chivers regarding dentistry as soon as possible.



**Garden City Cat Hospital - A Place Especially for Cats and Their People!**  
**332 Geneva Street - (905) 646-8800**