



**Franklin Farm**  
VETERINARY CLINIC

**HOURS**

Monday - Friday: 7:30am-6:30pm

Saturday: Closed

Sunday: Closed

# October 2024 Newsletter

Fear Free Veterinary Care For Your Furry Friends. That's Franklin Farm.

## **Professional Dental Scaling and Polishing Part 1 of Professional Dental Cleaning And Comprehensive Oral Health Assessments**

Written by: Wanda Hudgins, LVT, CVPM

A licensed veterinarian, or a trained veterinary technician, licensed veterinary technician, dentist or registered dental hygienist performs professional dental scaling and polishing, under direct, in the room supervision by a veterinarian.

At your pet's annual appointment, your veterinarian will examine its mouth and teeth for problems such as plaque, calculus, gingivitis, broken or missing teeth, discolored teeth, masses or other signs of periodontal disease.

### **Why does your pet need professional dental scaling and polishing?**

Dental disease puts tremendous stress on your pet's organs and can lead to infections in the liver, lungs, kidneys, and heart.

After your pet eats a meal, plaque begins to accumulate on the teeth within four hours. Plaque, a slimy biofilm, consists of bacteria, saliva, and food particles. If plaque is not removed with regular home dental care, the bacteria will mineralize and form a yellow-brown substance seen on the teeth called tartar.

When tartar is visible, the damage has already started. Bacteria present in tartar secrete enzymes that cause damage to the teeth, gums and jawbones. Painful conditions such as gingivitis and periodontal disease can become irreversible without treatment and result in tooth loss. To prevent or treat these conditions the teeth must be evaluated and cleaned by a veterinary professional. Our goal is to prevent tartar building up, inflamed gums, and tooth loss by instructing pet parents about proper oral home care and regular oral veterinary exams.

Dental tartar is firmly adhered to the surface of the teeth. Scaling to remove tartar is accomplished using ultrasonic and sonic power scalers, plus hand instruments that must have a sharp working edge to be used effectively.

Professional dental scaling includes scaling the surfaces of the teeth **both above and below the gingival margin** (gum line), followed by dental polishing. **The most critical part of a dental scaling procedure is scaling the tooth surfaces that are within the gingival pocket (the subgingival space between the gum and the root), where periodontal disease is active.** This is done utilizing a sonic and ultrasonic scaler with specialized periodontal tips specifically developed for subgingival use while the pet is anesthetized. Non-professional dental scaling removes dental tartar on the visible surfaces of the teeth only leaving thick grooves in the teeth; the subgingival space cannot be scaled on an unanesthetized pet or by a non-veterinarian. Non-professional dental scaling has little effect on a pet's health, provides a false sense of accomplishment, and is purely cosmetic.

Only a licensed veterinarian may perform subgingival scaling, or a trained veterinary technician, as stated above, under direct, in the room supervision by a veterinarian.

Human patients cooperate so that the dental scaling is performed by a professional trained in the procedures and can be completed successfully without anesthesia. However, access to the subgingival area of every tooth is impossible in an unanesthetized canine or feline patient. Since periodontal disease is active subgingival, it is essential to perform subgingival scaling.

Small grooves are made in the teeth after scaling of the plaque and tartar from the teeth. In order for tartar and plaque to not adhere to those grooves, a dental polisher is used. Polishing the teeth is done by using an oral, varying speed instrument that involves smoothing the tooth surface, making it glossy and lustrous, delaying the reattachment of plaque and tartar, and maintaining periodontal health. After polishing, a barrier sealant is applied to the gum line reducing the formation of plaque and calculus for up to two weeks.

### **What Is Regular Home Dental Care?**

Dental disease is the most common illness encountered in veterinary medicine and affects 8 out of 10 pets. Eighty percent of dogs and seventy percent of cats have some degree of oral disease by age three. It is also the most preventable disease with proper and regular home dental care. Good dental care can help your pet live up to 20% longer.

Regular home dental care starts with brushing your pet's teeth. Brushing your pet's teeth can go a long way toward preventing dental disease. Aim at brushing your pet's teeth once daily or at least twice a week and make it a part of your routine. Choose pet specific toothpaste as human

toothpaste may be toxic if ingested. Please see our website to read on “Dental Home Care Basics” which includes a detailed description of how to brush your pet’s teeth.

Toys, treats, rawhide chews, and specially formulated foods are available to help keep your pet’s teeth clean, but brushing is the most successful strategy. Most of these toys and foods have a mild abrasive action to help wipe away the thin layer of protein that builds up on teeth. Others are treated with enzymes to help reduce bacteria. Your veterinarian may also recommend gels, sprays, rinses, water additives or special treats or foods that chemically retard plaque. We recommend CET Aqua Dental water additive for plaque prevention, as well as CET HEXtra and Veggie Dent chews. Diets include Science Diet T/D and Royal Canin Dental.

Follow-up exams with your veterinarian are important to monitor home care and signs of dental disease. Keep in mind that if home dental care is not provided, then **professional dental cleanings may be needed more frequently** and brushing alone may not completely eliminate the need for thorough professional dental cleanings and comprehensive oral exams. If you or your pet is having difficulty with home care, please contact your veterinarian so you can work together to find an agreeable solution. Taking care of your pet’s teeth and gums is a great way to improve your pet’s overall health.

Preventative dental care including regular tooth brushing, dental chews, prescription dental diets, and regular veterinary examinations can improve your pet’s quality and length of life.



## HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS! Written by the ASPCA

Halloween can be the spookiest night of the year, but keeping your pets safe doesn't have to be tricky. The ASPCA recommends taking these simple, common-sense precautions to keep your pet happy and healthy all the way to November 1.

### **Stash the Treats**

The candy bowl is for trick-or-treaters, not Scruffy or Fluffy. Several popular Halloween treats are toxic to pets. Chocolate in all forms—especially dark or baking chocolate—can be very dangerous for cats and dogs, and sugar-free candies containing the sugar substitute xylitol can cause serious problems in pets. If you suspect your pet has ingested something toxic, please call your veterinarian or the ASPCA Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435 immediately.

### **Watch the Decorations and Keep Wires Out of Reach**

While a carved jack-o-lantern certainly is festive, pets can easily knock over a lit pumpkin and start a fire. Curious kittens are especially at risk of getting burned or singed by candle flame. Popular Halloween plants such as pumpkins and decorative corn are considered relatively nontoxic, but can produce stomach discomfort in pets who nibble on them.

### **Be Careful with Costumes**

For some pets, wearing a costume may cause undue stress. The ASPCA recommends that you don't put your dog or cat in a costume unless you know he or she loves it. If you do dress up your pet for Halloween, make sure the costume does not limit his or her movement, sight or ability to breathe, bark or meow. Check the costume carefully for small, dangling or easily chewed-off pieces that could present a choking hazard. Ill-fitting outfits can get twisted on external objects or your pet, leading to injury.

Be sure to have your pet try on the costume before the big night. If he or she seems distressed or shows abnormal behavior, consider letting your pet wear his or her "birthday suit" or don a festive bandana instead.

### **Keep Pets Calm and Easily Identifiable**

Halloween brings a flurry of activity with visitors arriving at the door, and too many strangers can often be scary and stressful for pets. All but the most social dogs and cats should be kept in a separate room away from the front door during peak trick-or-treating hours. While opening the door for guests, be sure that your dog or cat doesn't dart outside. And always make sure your pet is wearing proper identification—if for any reason he or she does escape, a collar with ID tags and/or a microchip can be a lifesaver for a lost pet.

With these helpful safety tips Halloween can be a happy, healthy and stressless time for you and your fur babies.

## Dogs Corner



**Dog Fact:** The Tibetan Spaniels are known for their friendly and affectionate nature. Tibetan Spaniels are intelligent, adaptable, and make excellent family pets. They have a distinctive appearance with a lion-like mane, a double coat, and a plume-like tail that curls over their back. They were highly regarded in Tibetan culture and were often given as sacred gifts. They were believed to bring good luck and fortune. The breed's small size made them well-suited for monastery life, where they could easily navigate the sacred spaces

## Cats Corner

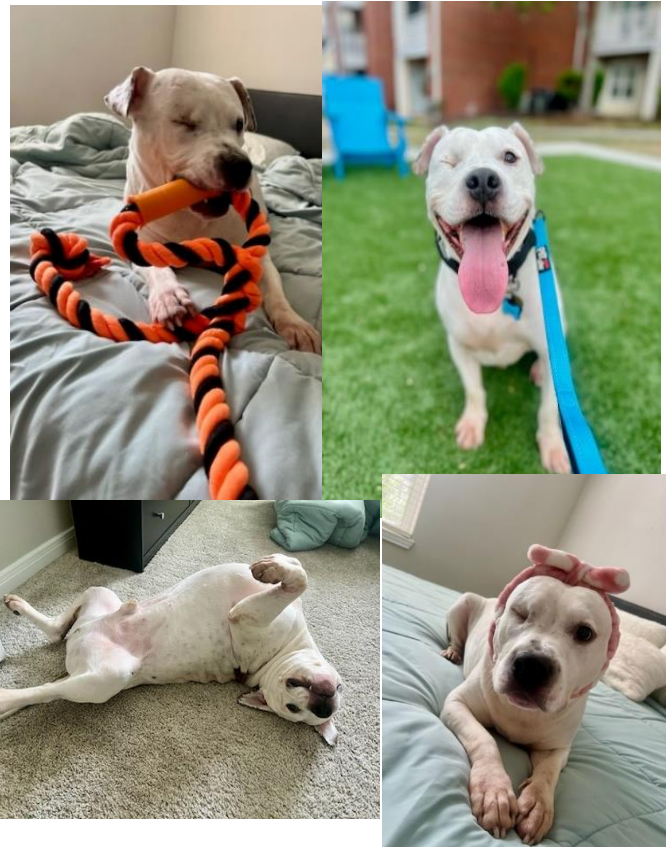


**Black Cat Fact:** It is believed in many cultures that black cats of any breed, size, or origin attract wealth and good fortune, and are considered to be a symbol of "good luck". In Scandinavia and some European countries, people believe that the black cat is the symbol of fertility and Dutch people believe, if they will keep a black cat in the empty cradle of a newly married couple then they will be blessed with children.

## Pet of the Month: Butch

Written by Liliana Vasquez

Butch is a 3-year-old pit bull who is new to our clinic but has quickly become best friends with all of the staff. He is the best boy ever who is easily influenced with food and love during his visits. He is a lover boy who likes to get all of the pets and hugs when he is here. He hasn't found a food he doesn't like and specifically loves peanut butter and cookies. His favorite toys are ropes and any hard bones he can chew. Despite having a rough upbringing, he has remained resilient, loving and just wants to cuddle. He is a big boy with a bigger heart and we are so happy to have met him.





## Pet Desk is Here!

We have a new interactive communication tool for your pet's health called PetDesk. It is a mobile app where you will receive reminders for your pet's health care, access your pet's vaccine information and appointment history, access to refill history and has informative pet related articles. You can utilize the app for 24/7 online booking, request prescription refills, receive lab work results and you can receive text updates from our hospital staff.

Download the app now!



## PET DENTAL AWARENESS:

We have had a large response to National Pet Dental Health awareness. Book your pet's dental cleaning and oral health exam during November and December and you will receive \$100.00 off the cost of those services.



## RUFFerral Program:

At Franklin Farm we believe "RUFFerrals" are the greatest form of flattery. Refer a friend and your pet will receive a **\$25.00** credit at your next appointment. Your referral's pet will receive a FREE bag of treats at their first appointment.



## Celebrations in October:

National Pet Wellness Month is in October. The goal of the month is to promote pet health and wellness all year long. Make certain your pet(s) is current on its annual wellness visit and up-to-date on all of its applicable vaccines. It's also a time when people across the country volunteer for pet safety and support animal welfare organizations.



This ensures the best opportunity for care for all of our patients.

Thank you for your anticipated assistance!



## Cancellation Policy:

Hello Everyone: We need your help! If you are unable to keep your appointment for any reason, please call to reschedule or cancel the appointment more than 24 hours in advance of your scheduled appointment time.

This allows ample time for other clients to call and get their fur babies seen.

We understand that you all have a lot going on in your lives and unexpected things pop up, so please remember to contact us **more than 24 hours** in advance of your scheduled appointment time.

We have implemented a Cancellation Policy, as follows:

If you need to reschedule or cancel your appointment, please do so **more than 24 hours** in advance of your appointment time. If you reschedule/cancel less than 24 hours leading up to your appointment, or no show, you will be charged for the office visit fee correlating to your appointment.

When you reschedule or cancel **more than 24 hours** in advance, it allows other patients to be seen in your rescheduled/canceled spot.