



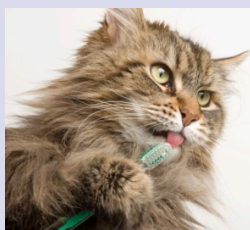
## Mews & News

### Wellness Packages

Did you know that we offer Wellness Packages to help keep your cat healthy through every life stage? Wellness Packages include recommended twice yearly wellness exams, all necessary vaccines, and fecal testing. Wellness packages for kittens also include feline leukemia testing and a first dewormer dose. Is your cat over 8 years old? We offer Senior Wellness Packages that include everything in a regular package plus senior screening bloodwork to find problems like kidney disease or diabetes *before* your cat gets sick!

**New for 2011!** All cats with Wellness Packages will also receive 25% off of all other exam fees. So, if your cat gets sick, you will receive 25% off the exam fee for that visit. As always, we offer free unlimited nail trims throughout the year for all of our patients with Wellness Packages.

### Feline Dentistry - What you need to know



Dental disease, in one form or another, is one of the most common problems that we see in our feline patients.

Unfortunately, many pet owners are unaware of the variety and extent of dental disease that can affect their pets. Dental disease can mean simply tartar or gingivitis, more advanced

periodontal disease, or serious problems such as tooth resorption or broken teeth. We'll give you an overview of the different types of dental diseases that can affect cats, how we treat them, and what you can do at home to prevent them.

Cats' adult teeth start to erupt around 14 weeks of age, and they have a full set of adult teeth by 6-7 months of age. By 2 or 3 years of age, many cats will have visible tartar accumulation or gingivitis. This type of dental disease is easily treatable with thorough cleaning and attention to dental care at home. We'll talk more about that in a minute.

If left untreated, gingivitis will eventually progress to periodontal disease. A diagnosis of periodontal disease means that the structures that hold the tooth in place have been affected. Signs of periodontal disease include "bad breath" or an odor in the mouth, reluctance to eat or difficulty eating, red or swollen gums, and tooth loss. Periodontal disease cannot be reversed, but we can stop or slow its progression with proper cleaning and home dental care.

Resorptive lesions are a very common form of dental disease that affects a significant proportion of our feline patients. Affected teeth develop holes, or lesions, where the tooth begins to resorb. These lesions are similar to cavities, but they are not caused by tooth decay. The cause of resorptive lesions is unknown, and unfortunately, cats with very good oral care can be affected as well as cats with less than optimal dental health. Resorptive lesions cannot be treated or "filled" like a cavity, and affected teeth must be removed. Cats with resorptive lesions are typically painful, reacting quickly when the affected area of the tooth is touched, although most affected cats do not show signs of pain at home unless the lesions are very advanced.

Cats can suffer from broken teeth as well, particularly cats who go outdoors, cats who like to fight with other animals, or those who suffer significant trauma such as being hit by a car. If the damage to the tooth is significant enough to expose the tooth's pulp chamber, then the tooth must be removed. An alternative treatment for some damaged teeth may be a root canal procedure.

If the veterinarian finds a dental problem with your cat, then she will recommend a full "dental cleaning and treatment" to further evaluate and treat the diseased teeth. These types of procedures are carried out with the patient under full anesthesia. This provides the opportunity for a more thorough oral examination, cleaning of all the teeth, and treatment of any diseased or damaged teeth.

### The Dentistry Procedure

### Spring 2011

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Feline Dentistry

Pet Spotlight

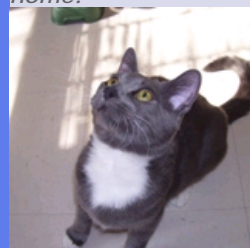
In Memoriam

Ask Izzy

The Last Word

### Pet Spotlight

*Help Harvey find a home!*



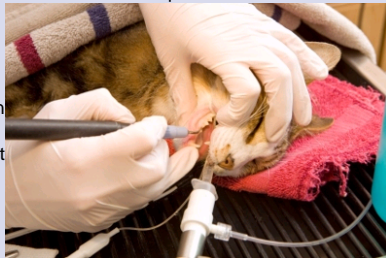
came to us several months ago after being found in a parking lot. He was infested with scabies mites, but still very friendly! We have cleared up the mites and gotten Harvey neutered and vaccinated, and he is ready to find a new home.



lots of energy. Harvey would really do well in a home with a young kitten, or with no other cats. Harvey doesn't get along well with other adult cats - he is so playful that he never leaves other cats alone!



Prior to anesthesia, we will run a small blood profile on your cat to ensure that his kidneys and liver are working normally, and that his blood sugar is normal. A full physical examination is performed to check for problems that may not have been noted previously. After the bloodwork, your cat will receive a sedative injection to make him drowsy. This will facilitate the placement of an IV catheter, through which we will deliver fluids and medications during the procedure.



Once the IV catheter is in place, we will administer an IV anesthetic to your cat. This drug combination will induce unconsciousness in your cat. We will then place a breathing tube in his throat to deliver oxygen and anesthetic gas, as well as to protect his airway from water used during the dental procedure. Your cat's vital signs will be monitored and recorded during the procedure so that any problems can be identified and treated quickly. A warm water blanket is used to support your cat's body temperature during anesthesia.

Once your cat is anesthetized and attached to the anesthesia machine and monitors, the veterinarian will perform a thorough oral examination. Each tooth is examined individually and any abnormalities, such as receding gingiva, periodontal pockets, or resorptive lesions are recorded. The veterinarian will also examine the rest of your cat's oral cavity, including the tongue and other soft tissues. Teeth are cleaned and polished at this time, very similar to the way that human hygienists clean people's teeth.

After all of the teeth have been examined and cleaned, any diseased or damaged teeth are treated or extracted. Typically, local nerve blocks are used for these procedures to reduce your cat's post-operative pain. Small sutures may be used following extractions to close the surgical site. These sutures will dissolve after 2-3 weeks.

When your cat's dental treatment is finished, the anesthetic gas is turned off. After he has regained consciousness, the breathing tube and IV catheter are removed, and he is moved to a quiet area to recover and rest. Prior to recovery, we will take advantage of the opportunity presented by a sleeping cat to trim his nails or perform any other small grooming necessary.

## Home Care



After dental treatment, your cat may be sent home with pain medications or antibiotics. You may also be instructed to feed your cat moist or soft food for several days. Often, a follow-up examination is scheduled to evaluate healing.

Aside from resorptive lesions, many of the dental diseases that we commonly see may be prevented by attention to dental care at home. This may involve tooth brushing (yes, it *can* be done!), special dental treats, or prescription dental food. There is an excellent video demonstration how to brush your cat's teeth. It can be viewed on our [website](#) or at the [Cornell Feline Health Center website](#).

## Ask Izzy



Dear Izzy,  
Why does my cat chatter when she sees a bird outside? It is pretty funny to see, but I wonder if she is trying to talk to the birds!

Signed, Amused

Dear Amused,  
I know exactly what you are talking about. I happen to do this myself when I have visitors outside my window here at the clinic. My favorites are cardinals or even squirrels who come to pick at the extra bird seed. Cats in the wild are very keen hunters, and when you see a cat "chattering" it is usually when they are staring intently at a prey animal, like a bird or small mammal. It is a throwback to their old hunting instincts.

Sincerely,

Izzy

[Send Izzy your question](#) today!

## The Last Word

take Harvey into your home, please call or [email](#) us and we can set up a time for you to meet him!



### Memoriam...

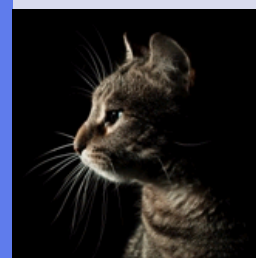
*In honor of those pets that have died in the past 3 months...*

Harley O.  
Kramer G.  
Molly M.  
Tigger K.  
Weller L.

## We now offer AVID microchip identification!

Microchip identification provides an extra level of assurance to help your cat find his way back home if he is ever lost.

Microchipping is a simple procedure that can be performed at your cat's next regular checkup exam, without sedation, in under 5 minutes. The cost of microchipping even includes the database registration fee to get your pet's information on file. Ask us about microchipping your cat today!



*whiskers on each side of their face.*

*Whiskers are used for*

Finally, spring! Well, maybe for a day or two, anyway. I heard that it is supposed to snow again later this weekend. But, it's saying light later, and I have heard birds in the morning lately. Izzy is even getting out her spring color bandanas to wear! I think that she is excited about getting some birds back at her bird feeder.

Izzy wants to thank all the cats who came in to get their teeth cleaned in February, National Pet Dental Health month. Let's keep dental health month going all year long!

If your cat goes outside in the spring and summer, don't forget to start a flea preventative in March or April. Heartworm prevention is recommended for all cats, both indoor and outdoor, from spring through fall.

Until next time,

**Kerry Lewis, DVM**

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*As always, we welcome your feedback. If you have suggestions for how we can improve our newsletter, please call or e-mail us. We'd be happy to hear from you!*

*navigating in the dark, communicating with other cats, and for measuring tight spaces.*

*If a cat gains weight, 1 or 2 whiskers will grow longer to account for the cat's increased size.*

*The scientific name for whiskers is vibrissae.*

*Cats have small whiskers on the backs of their front feet to aid in sensing objects or textures.*

Are happy with the service you receive at our clinic?

[Write a Review](#)  
and let us know how we're doing!