

# Nolan River Animal Hospital

## Dental Consent Form

A routine dental prophylaxis (prophylaxis) is performed *to prevent* dental disease. This is recommended *yearly* or every 2-3 years in pets that have good in-home care and proper diet as hidden subgingival tartar/disease may be present. Dental patients receive pain medication before the procedure, IV catheter, IV fluids, anesthesia induction, anesthesia monitoring, dental scaling and polishing. Pain medication will also be sent home.

Unfortunately, many times before dental care is provided for pets, dental disease is present. Just as in treating any other disease or injury, dental *treatment* requires a higher level of skill and knowledge, increased time, additional procedures and medications than if just preventive dental care is required. Just as preventive care for your pet is relatively inexpensive, treating dental disease can be significantly more costly. A comparison is if you take good care of your car with regular lube, oil and filter changes, and the cost is minimal compared to having to rebuild the engine or transmission. There is a wide variation in the degree of dental health in pets. Dental disease can be put into four categories: tartar, gingivitis, pyorrhea and periodontitis.

Tartar is the accumulation of plaque that has hardened on the teeth, usually starting at the gumline in conjunction with gingivitis. Gingivitis is inflammation of the gums. The gums may be irritated, inflamed or infected. You can easily see this by the increase in the pinkness of your pet's gums, especially at the gumline. The gingiva may have receded, allowing tooth roots to be exposed. The gingiva may have become hyperplastic, a condition where too much tissue has developed in an area.

Pyorrhea is very serious. It is pus in the mouth, usually between teeth and gums. This infection is usually causing periodontitis, which is loss of bone that holds the teeth in. Pyorrhea and Periodontitis go hand in hand. These pets may have damage to their heart valves, liver, kidneys and lungs caused by the dental disease. Once a kidney cell is damaged, it will never recover, nor be replaced by the body. We must prevent further damage to the kidneys. These pets are at increased risk, and require special care. We must be more cautious with these pets. We have gone to great expense to insure your pet is well monitored under the safest anesthesia possible.

One or more reasons cause dental tartar, gingivitis and/or periodontitis. The first reason is feeding canned or soft foods. These foods give no benefits to the teeth and gums because they require little to no chewing. The second is hairstyles/grooming. Pets that have beards or long hair around their mouth seem to develop dental disease faster than well-trimmed breeds or individuals. The hair around the lips catches moisture and bacteria and constantly feed bacteria into the mouth. Lack of grooming, or lack of in-home dental care is a leading condition. The final reason is genetics. As with our teeth - some people get cavities or excessive tartar due to genetics - some animals have more dental problems than others due to genetics. Since we cannot change our genetics, dry food, hard biscuits and *daily* brushing are our recommendations. We have seen significant improvement in dental health with pets fed the Royal Canin Dental diet.

Dental health is your choice. Let us help you keep your pet as healthy as possible. What we will do: (Note: The steps that require extra care have an asterisk behind them and incur extra charges.)

### **We will perform a preanesthesia physical exam.**

We will listen for a heart murmur or arrhythmia. We will listen to your pet's lungs.

We will alert you if any irregularities exist. If so, thoracic x-rays will be recommended. \*

We will not proceed if we feel your pet is not in appropriate health for anesthesia.

### **A preanesthetic injection will be given.**

This injection helps sedate your pet, reduces stress, and offers pain control.

### **An intravenous catheter will be placed and IV fluids started.**

Just as your doctor would place an IV catheter before anesthesia, so will we. IV catheters allow further IV injections to be given without stress to your pet. Additionally, it offers further security while your pet is under anesthesia. IV fluids are administered to help maintain blood pressure and prevent dehydration.

### **General anesthesia will be induced.**

The heart and respiration will be monitored. We use anesthetic protocols designed to be as safe as possible specific for your pet. Our anesthetic protocol provides for pain control. Most pets wake up minutes after the procedure is completed. We provide warmth during and after anesthesia, to prevent the body from cooling and keep your pet as comfortable as possible. With our protocol, our pets remain sedate and relaxed. Most pets are relatively 'bouncy' by the time they go home. Since sensitivities vary to anesthesia and sedation, some pets may continue to be more sedate than normal for 24 hours.

### **We will scale the tartar off the teeth.**

### **We will 'probe' around each tooth to determine if there is any periodontal disease.**

## **We will take dental X-rays if indicated. \***

Dental X-rays are indicated if there is any evidence of bone loss, periodontitis or fractured teeth. Dental X-rays are a good way to monitor dental health yearly, just as in human dentistry. We will call you if we feel there is a need for dental X-rays.

## **We will extract any tooth we feel is diseased or otherwise causing pain. \***

Extracting teeth requires additional time, instrumentation and *skill*. We have the instrumentation to allow extractions in as little time as possible. Alternatively, we will alert you if we feel a tooth can be treated with endodontics. We will refer you to a board-certified specialist if you elect this option, rather than extraction. We will call you to give you the choice. **Be sure to leave a phone number where you can be reached. If you are not available, we will use our judgment.**

## **We will treat gum disease if indicated. \***

Most pets do not require this option. A gingivectomy is removal of excess gum tissue that may be a source of pain for your pet or be creating a pocket. These pockets provide a home for bacteria to hide, and lead to periodontal disease. If tissue looks questionable, we will recommend biopsy of these tissues. Most of these tissues are benign growth, but a cancerous tumor may appear similar. A gel may be applied which will provide appropriate antibiotics directly to the gum line for an extended time. Overtime dental disease can cause bone loss. If this is the case, we may apply a gel under the gum line to encourage bone re-growth.

## **We will polish the teeth with a fluoride paste.**

The polish is important to help delay the recurrence of plaque and tartar.

## **Additional pain medication(s) will be administered if deemed appropriate.**

Pain medication will be used and prescribed if teeth are extracted or a gingivectomy has been performed, but may be indicated in other circumstances.

## **An antibiotic may be prescribed. \***

Many factors will be considered as to whether your pet should be on oral antibiotics. Since many pets will have gingivitis or worse, these pets will be prescribed a systemic orally administered antibiotic.

## **We will make recommendations if we think further diagnostics or treatments are indicated for your pet for any reason.**

### **\*Additional charge for service/product**

We strive to provide you with the advice that will allow you to make the best decision for your pet. In order to offer you the peace of mind you deserve, we recommend a pre-anesthetic blood profile prior to any anesthetic procedure. The latest technology enables us to perform these tests in the hospital just prior to anesthesia.

For all pets, young and old, it gives baseline data that can later be used for a more accurate diagnosis and treatment when a problem does arise. It can also detect disease in pets without visible symptoms; with many diseases, symptoms are only realized late in the disease when significant damage has already been done. In other words, an animal that looks and acts healthy is not necessarily disease-free. For those older pets, it can monitor organ degeneration and response to medication. These tests include **blood chemistry** profiles to evaluate your pet's vital organs, as well as **hematology** tests checking the blood cells themselves. These are similar to tests your own physician would perform prior to your undergoing anesthesia.

Although performing these tests cannot guarantee the absence of complications, it can significantly minimize the risk to your pet and provide you and us with peace of mind.

The total cost for these tests is \$ 68.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want my pet to have the recommended tests.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do not want my pet to have the recommended tests.

We also offer microchipping at an **additional cost** of \$50. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

## **DENTAL TREATMENT RELEASE**

I authorize the veterinarian and staff at Nolan River Animal Hospital to perform such dental procedures that have been described to me. I understand that no guarantee can be made regarding results or cure.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of pet owner/agent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number where you  
can be reached today.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date