

When one or more of the following conditions have been found: receding gum lines, root or bone exposure, loose teeth, infection and/or fracture, root damage such as resorption, tooth removal is often necessary. Our first priority is to save teeth that can be salvaged, but teeth that have lost bone attachment from chronic disease are unlikely to heal and need to be removed. For teeth with bone loss >50%, endodontic disease, crowding or deep caries, extraction is indicated.

Dogs and cats typically do very well after extractions and eat normally even after losing several teeth. The benefit of extracting diseased teeth far outweighs the benefit of leaving them in. Additionally, diseased or fractured teeth are very painful.

After COHAT (see teeth cleaning) dental radiographs (X-rays) are evaluated to determine the extent of bone loss and root changes. (See tooth anatomy) Oral nerve blocks are performed for elimination of intraoperative pain at the extraction site.

After regional anesthesia, the gum tissue around the root is elevated to expose the root, and multi-rooted teeth are sectioned into separate roots. Some of the bone around the root may be removed to aid extraction, and then a dental elevator is used to loosen the root from the socket.

After the roots are completely removed, the socket is cleaned of any diseased tissue. The bone is smoothed, and a flap of gum tissue and mucous membrane is sutured over the area to protect the healing socket. In some cases where very large roots are removed, a bone augmentation material is placed in the empty socket to speed bone regeneration.

Pain medications and sometimes antibiotics are prescribed post-surgically.

Only soft food should be fed for 10-14 days. Dry food must be soaked in water until soft to prevent injury to fragile healing gums.

Until the mouth has healed, chew toys must be put away and your pet must be discouraged from chewing on anything that might injure the mouth.

Typically, gums heal within two weeks and the sutures dissolve. We will schedule a recheck appointment in two weeks to insure proper healing and institute proper preventive care.