

Teeth Cleaning: COHAT

Although cleaning the teeth is certainly a part of the dental care we provide, we prefer to use the more descriptive term **COHAT**. What does that mean?

C= Comprehensive

O=Oral

H=Health

A=Assessment and

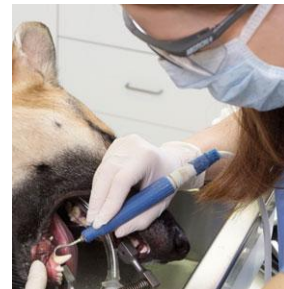
T=Treatment

Why COHAT? To safely and fully evaluate all tooth surfaces, and below the gum line, our patients need to be anesthetized. It is important to perform a complete oral examination to fully diagnose dental conditions and perform proper treatment. There may be several different stages of periodontal disease or other oral conditions present in one patient.

What does a COHAT include? Your pet will undergo a *pre-anesthetic physical examination*, and a blood profile will be evaluated to monitor blood cell counts and organ function. Once this has been reviewed, an *anesthetic plan* is formulated for the pet. An intravenous (I.V.) catheter is placed for I.V. fluids and anesthetic drugs. *General anesthesia* is induced, and your pet is set up in our dental suite with *anesthetic monitors* for pulse oximetry, blood pressure, and respiratory rate. A warming blanket is placed around the pet, and a veterinary assistant monitors the vital signs and anesthetic level.

THEN, we are ready to *examine and treat* your pet's oral condition:

- Each tooth is examined, and a periodontal probe is used to check for pockets. The gum tissue is examined for inflammation.
- The crowns of the teeth are cleaned with hand and ultrasonic instruments to remove plaque and tartar.
- An ultrasonic *scaler* or hand instruments are then used under the gums which are the most critical part of treating periodontal disease.
- Dental radiographs are taken to evaluate the bone and roots beneath the gum line.
- Any teeth with periodontal disease are treated (*see periodontal surgery and treatment*) or extracted (*see oral surgery and extractions*).



If no further treatment is needed, then the teeth are *polished* with prophy paste, and *fluoride* foam is put on the crowns of the teeth. After drying, *OraVet*, a plaque preventive treatment is put on the teeth to help keep plaque from sticking to the teeth.

Post anesthetic monitoring is continued until your pet is completely recovered, and they can be released.

Instructions for continued *preventive dental care* are sent home to help you maintain your pet's oral health between COHATs.