Periodontal disease in cats (a common form of dental disease)

Periodontal disease is a form of dental disease in cats which describes a range of oral health issues including gum inflammation, attachment loss of the structures supporting the teeth, tooth mobility, and pain. Periodontal disease should be taken seriously by every owner as it is a leading health issue in cats and can cause severe pain, making it important to detect and deal with it early. This study aimed to identify the frequency of periodontal disease in UK cats under veterinary care during 2019 and to explore which types of cats were most at risk.

**Breed prevalence for periodontal disease**

The cat breeds with the highest annual prevalence of periodontal disease were: Siamese (18.7%), Maine Coon (16.7%) and British Shorthair (15.5%).

**What disorders are linked to periodontal disease?**

- Heart murmur
- Hyperthyroidism
- Cardiac dysrhythmia
- Ear discharge
- Hairball/furball
- Cat flu
- Obesity/overweight
- Chronic kidney failure
- Thin Haircoat disorder
- Obstructive uropathy
- Ear炎
- Road traffic accident
- Traumatic injury
- Siamese
- Maine Coon
- British Shorthair

**Relative risk of diagnosis of periodontal disease**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Relative Risk of Diagnosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 15 years</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 15 years</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 12 years</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 9 years</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 6 years</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Risk factors for periodontal disease**

- Aging
- Breeds
- Sex/neuter
- Bodyweight
- Age
- Allergy
- Obesity/overweight
- Pulmonary disease
- Diabetes
- Hyperthyroidism
- Chronic kidney failure
- Arthritis
- Cancer

**Conclusions**

- Early diagnosis is key to reducing the risk of pain and discomfort.
- Keep an eye on your cat’s oral health and encourage them to become familiar with toothbrushing.
- Caring for your cat’s teeth is important, even if they are not showing any signs of discomfort.
- Regular toothbrushing can help prevent periodontal disease and improve your cat’s overall health.

**Tips for brushing cats’ teeth**

1. Introduce toothbrushing at an early age.
2. Use a gentle, non-abrasive toothpaste.
3. Be patient and praise your pet.
4. Reward good behavior.
5. Gradually introduce the toothbrush.
6. Make toothbrushing a part of your daily routine.

**Total number of cats for which periodontal disease was diagnosed in veterinary care in 2019**: More than 12 million cats in the UK were treated for periodontal disease in 2019.

**Relative risk of diagnosis of periodontal disease**

- Cats aged ≥ 15 years have a risk of diagnosis of periodontal disease that is 1.6 times higher than cats aged < 15 years.
- Cats aged < 12 years have a risk of diagnosis of periodontal disease that is 1.9 times higher than cats aged ≥ 15 years.
- Cats aged < 6 years have a risk of diagnosis of periodontal disease that is 2.5 times higher than cats aged ≥ 15 years.

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**Periodontal disease in cats, suggesting a welfare priority in cats because it is common and can cause severe pain, making it important to detect and deal with it early.**

**The risk of periodontal disease rose steeply as cats aged under 3 years and decreased gradually from 3 years of age.**

**Click to read the full study**

[https://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass](https://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass)

[https://doi.org/10.1177/1098612X231158154](https://doi.org/10.1177/1098612X231158154)