



## Cats Exclusive Veterinary Center

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This letter is meant to give you general information about our dental services and the dental estimate, including some options that you will want to consider.

**Pre-anesthetic blood testing** takes a small sample of blood, and evaluates kidney and liver health, as well as blood sugar and electrolytes. These tests provide baseline values and can give an early warning of problems that are not apparent yet. We always suggest that these tests be done, but the older the cat, the more important this information is. If blood tests have been done within the last month with normal results, they will probably not need to be repeated.

**Ultrasonic cleaning** is the backbone of dental care, and the procedures we use are very similar to those you experience in your dentist's office. The teeth, including the surfaces under the gum line, are cleaned and polished. An evaluation of each tooth is made, to look for areas of infection, and "pockets," where the gums are coming loose from the roots of the teeth.

**Dental x-rays** are included in every estimate, but are not indicated in every patient. Where there is physical evidence of periodontal disease, x-rays show us how healthy or diseased the roots of the teeth are. Sometimes, we cannot tell whether or not we need to take x-rays until the teeth have been cleaned. Generally, we only take x-rays when the health of a tooth is in doubt. If you prefer that we *not* take x-rays, regardless of our findings, please let us know.

**Extractions** are only performed on teeth we know are harmful to the cat. Teeth that are decayed or diseased are painful—cats are so stoic, and they cannot talk, so this is hard for us to realize. We know that this is true because clients often report that their cat, who seemed normal before, is more active, more friendly, and eats better after dental treatment. Also, infected mouths can "shower" bacteria into the bloodstream, and cause problems with heart and kidney function. Like dental x-rays, we can't always tell from a physical exam when extractions are needed, so we generally include them in estimates even when the teeth all appear to be healthy. If you prefer, we can call you before performing any extractions.

**Anesthesia** in dental cases is maintained by oxygen with isoflourane, using an endotracheal tube. An animal health technician monitors all patients, and a pulse oximeter measures the oxygen in the blood. *Pain medication is given to all patients*; the choice of drug and dose depend on the severity of the dental disease. In older cats, cats who need extensive procedures, or cats with other medical problems, *intravenous fluids* are important. In healthy young cats, with routine dental care, fluids given subcutaneously may be needed to prevent dehydration. Anesthesia charges depend on the length of time the procedure takes—we take every precaution to reduce the risk of complication, and work to make the time under anesthesia as short as possible.

When we can tell that dental infection is present, we suggest that start antibiotics prior to the dental, in order to give the cat a "head start. Please ask your veterinarian if this is advised for your cat's dental.

If you have any questions, please contact our office or your veterinarian.