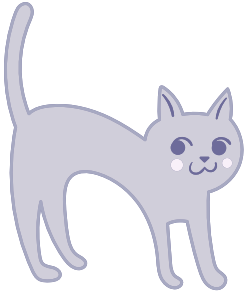


# PRAIRIE PAW PRINTS

*Crookston Pet Clinic's Newsletter*



Happy March! Spring is almost here! **Our office is open and we welcome 1 guest in per appointment, but our doors will remain locked. We will continue to provide curbside service if requested.**

If you have any information you'd like to submit, or perhaps a topic you'd like to see talked about, please send it to us via email at [crookstonpetclinic@gmail.com](mailto:crookstonpetclinic@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you and providing you with information that you WANT to know about!

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Women in Veterinary Medicine**

**Pet Dental Care**

**Cat Training**

**DR. LEAH'S CORNER**



# Did you know?

For the Japanese, the opening of the cherry blossom, Japan's national flower, in March or April signals the start of spring!

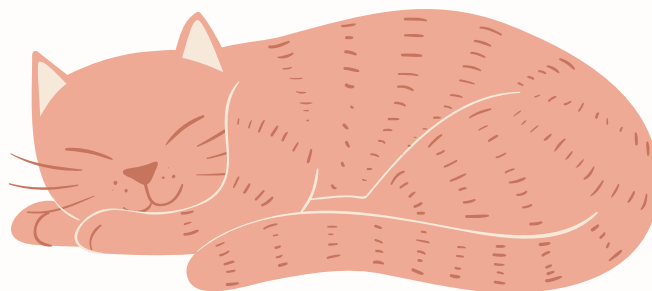


## Dr. Leah's Corner

### Arthritis in Cats

Cats live in a vertical world. Given a choice, cats prefer to rest in a high spot that allows them to survey their "kingdom" without you seeing them. Healthy, agile cats can make a vertical leap from the floor to the top of the refrigerator with ease. When we see a decrease in this vertical living, it's time to pay attention. Cats often do not exhibit outward signs of pain, they suffer in silence. But you may notice that they are not in that high perch anymore or perhaps they have a new strategy for reaching that spot by jumping on a chair, then jumping on the counter, then jumping to the top of the cabinet or refrigerator.

To help alleviate joint pain, maintain a healthy body weight. cats should be long and slinky, not rounded with large fat pads on the stomach. Use supplements such as glucosamine and omega 3 & 6 fatty acids. Unlike dogs, we do not have a class of anti-inflammatory medications approved for long term use in cats. Cats are pretty smart about what they eat and it can be hard to give pills to a cat every day. The good news is that there is a new medication that will alleviate joint pain in cats that we hope to see by the end of this year. Then we can do more to help aging cats live a more comfortable life.



# The History of Women in Veterinary Medicine

As a lot of you reading this may know, our clinic is predominately female. Being March is Women's history month I wanted to give all of you a little insight to female's in the industry. This article was written by Chewy Editorial. The link to this article will be on the bottom of the final page. I urge you all to read this, because though I do not have enough room in the Newsletter for all of these brilliant women, their stories deserve to be shared as well.

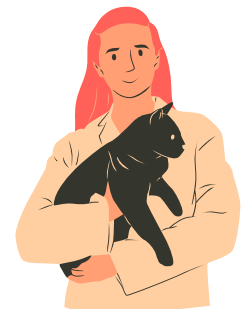
## Dr. Elinor McGrath

When it comes to women veterinarians, Dr. Elinor McGrath was the O.G. A true icon, she's widely considered America's first female veterinarian.

Born around 1888, Dr. McGrath's love of animals inspired her to take on the male-dominated veterinary field. She became the first woman admitted to the Chicago Veterinary College in 1907- the first of barriers she'd break down to achieve her dream. She endured bullying and harassment from schoolmates, but persevered with encouragement from a progressive mentor, says Juliette Fassett, founder of *Dr. McGrath's*, an online seller of animal care products named for the trailblazer.

"The dean at the college told her she was going to make a better veterinarian than all of them," Fassett says.

Dr. McGrath prevailed, graduating in 1910- a decade before the U.S. women were granted a right to vote. And her mentor was right- McGrath was among the the best in the business. She ran a small animal practice in Chicago for decades, and became well known for animal- friendly practices like decorating a Christmas tree with pet presents during the holidays. She also established the city's first pet cemetery, driven by her understanding of the strong bond between people and their pets. "She deserves a place in the history books," Fassett says.



*For more of this article go to [Be.Chewy.com](https://be.chewy.com)*



# The Importance of Dental Health for Your Pet

When it comes to keeping our pets healthy, pet parents often overlook the importance of oral hygiene. According to the American Veterinary Dental College, it's estimated that the majority of pets show symptoms of dental or periodontal disease by three years of age.



One of the best (and easiest) indicators of oral disease is bad breath. Some pet parents believe that bad breath is something pets naturally have and consequently, often goes unnoticed and untreated. It is easy for many pet parents to overlook the importance of promoting good oral hygiene.

## Why Dental Health is Important.....

Every pet parent wants his or her beloved pet to have excellent oral hygiene. Four reasons how poor dental care can affect your pet's overall health:

- **Bad Breath or Halitosis:** If the odor of your pet's breath make you recoil, it's time to seek good dental care.
- **Tooth Loss :** If structures supporting your pet's teeth become infected, the teeth fall out.
- **Oral Pain:** Severe dental disease can be very painful for cats and dogs. Keep an eye out for the tell-tale signs.
- **Organ Damage:** Bacteria in the plaque can enter the bloodstream and spread to the heart, kidneys, and liver. This spread, called bacteremia, can damage organs and make your animal sick.

# What is Pet Dental Disease?

Dental or periodontal disease affects the teeth, gums and support structures that surround your pet's teeth. It begins with a simple plaque buildup on the tooth enamel which contains bacteria and food particles.

If the plaque is not addressed, it remains on the tooth surface and eventually hardens into tartar. When tartar is above the gum line, a veterinary team can remove it easily during a professional dental cleaning.

Tartar that makes its way below the gum line is the real problem. Tartar below the gum line causes inflammation and not only damages the structures supporting the teeth but also causes infection. If dental disease reaches this stage, pets can experience severe dental problems and pain.

## Factors Associated with Dental Disease

- **Age:** Dental Disease is more common in older pets, but evidence can appear as soon as three years of age.
- **Breed :** Persians and other small flat-faced cats and smaller dog breeds are more likely to have over - crowded or misaligned teeth that are difficult to keep clean, making them more prone to disease.
- **Food / Diet :** Some foods can increase your pet's risk of dental disease, so ask your veterinarian for a nutritional recommendation.



# Signs of Dental Disease in Your Pet

Even if your pet isn't outwardly showing signs of oral health issues, it's worth asking our veterinarians during a regular health exam to help prevent potential problems.

## Symptoms of oral health problems

- Bad breath
- Yellow or brown crust on tooth surface
- Bleeding gums
- Change in chewing habits
- Tooth loss
- Drooling

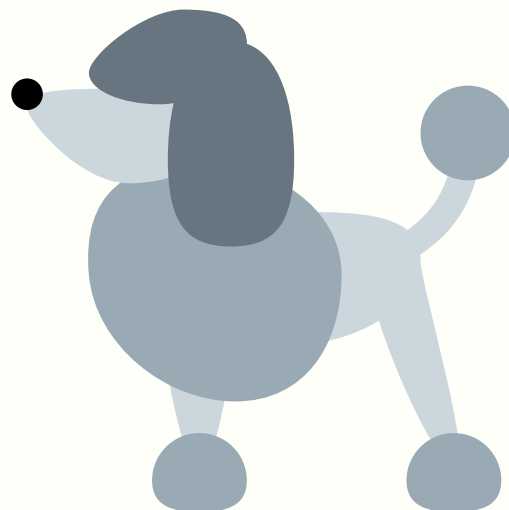
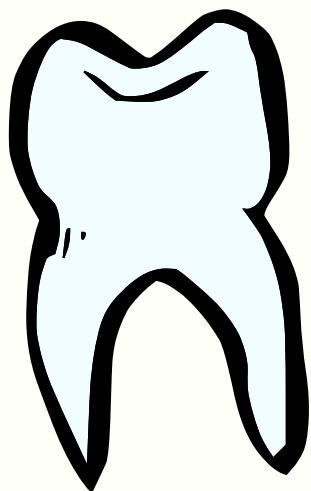


If you observe any of these conditions please make an appointment with us as soon as possible. That way, we can alleviate any further dental deterioration and get your pet on the right path to a healthy mouth.

## 3 Ways to Promote Better Dental Health for Your Pet

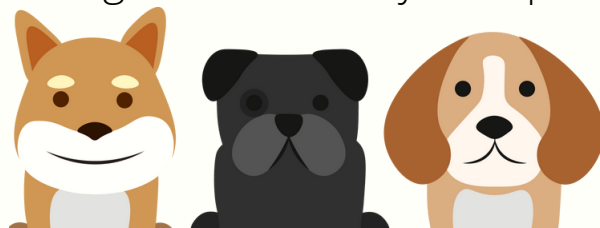
Protecting the oral health of your pet is super important for many of the reasons we've outlined. Although 'perfect' oral hygiene can be elusive, there are ways to be proactive and help stave off the possibility of dental disease.

If there is *one best option* you can choose to address your pet's dental health, we suggest visiting our veterinarian for a professional exam. Our veterinarian knows what's best for your pet's teeth and will be able to address any issues she finds. Investing in preventative oral hygiene is one of the best ways to keep your pet healthy.



# 1. Professional Dental Cleanings

One of the many services we offer is dental cleaning. The best way to ensure your pet's oral health is to have them undergo a professional cleaning by our team. These cleanings require general anesthesia to allow our veterinarian to clean above and below the gum line. This ensures that your pet's entire mouth is scrubbed. Although more costly, a professional cleaning is the best way to improve and maintain your pet's oral hygiene.



## 2. Diet / Prescription Pet Food

It's always a good idea to discuss nutrition with our veterinarian for many reasons, dental health care included. Generally we recommend Royal Canin. Although this food is very popular it doesn't mean that it's the best solution for your particular situation. A consultation with our veterinarian will provide recommendations that will get your pet on the right path to a healthy mouth.

## 3. Healthy Oral Hygiene Habits for Pet Parents

A preventative measure pet owners can take is to brush your pet's teeth. Yes, this is a thing and is done to prevent plaque from mineralizing into tartar. Getting your pet comfortable to brushing can take time and patience, so make sure you reward your furry family member for their cooperation!

### Introducing the

**toothpaste:** use a finger toothbrush or an index finger wrapped in gauze and gently rub pet-specific toothpaste over your pet's teeth and gums. A splash of chicken broth or tuna juice can make it more palatable.

**Brushing:** brush teeth and gums gently, finishing with the bottom front teeth. Focus on the outside surface facing the cheek, as this part is most prone to tartar build up.

Combine all three factors and you'll have no trouble keeping your pet's oral health in tip-top shape.



# Yes, You Really Can Train Your Cat

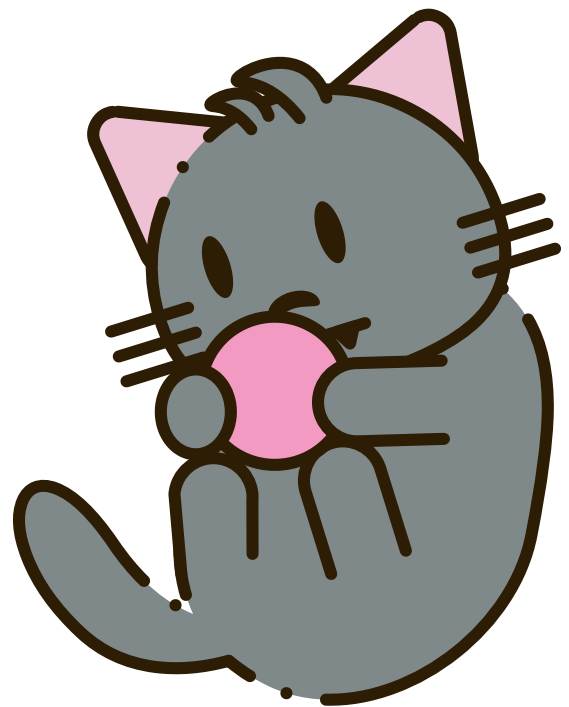
While cat owners know their pets are bonded to them, felines are often thought of as uninterested in *collaborating* with people. It's believed all communication has to be entirely on their terms, without any give and take. But that's not true.

Cats can and do learn various behaviors through training. People teach their feline pets to sit, to stop meowing if they want to be fed, to scratch on scratching posts rather than the furniture, and other "tricks". How?

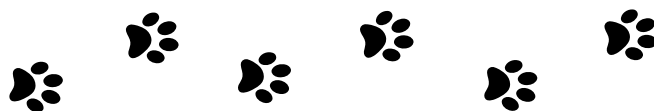
Through positive reinforcement. That's how cats learn best, says the American Association of Feline Practitioners. Positive reinforcement means you reward a cat for behavior you desire.

## When to reward

The reward has to come immediately for the cat to understand that it's about the behavior you want to reinforce. If you wait more than 2 or 3 seconds, he will not get the sequence and think you are rewarding him "just because" or for some behavior that came *after* the behavior you were interested in getting him to engage in.



For instance, if you want your cat to use the scratching post, entice him to do so and then, immediately after he does, dispense the prize.





## What to reward

The reward will differ depending on what your cat prefers. It has to be something very desirable to the cat, or he will not be interested in working with you. For some cats it's an especially delicious treat. For others, it's catnip, interactive play, stroking or grooming. You know your cat and what he thinks of as having high value.

## The power of ignoring undesirable behavior

The other component of positive reinforcement, along with providing rewards, is ignoring the behavior that you consider undesirable. It can be extremely effective. For instance, let's say you don't like it when your cat keeps meowing to be fed. Then do not feed him when he is meowing. That only serves to give him the clearest message that his vocal demands work. Instead, ignore his vocal pleas. When he finally stops meowing, put his food down in the bowl, perhaps with a special treat given by hand as an appetizer. That will help him learn that *not* meowing is what does the trick.



# The role of punishment

While ignoring undesired behavior and rewarding sought- after behavior can work wonders, what doesn't work is active punishment, You should never punish a cat for not complying with your cue to engage in a particular behavior. The American Association of Feline Practitioners rightly points out that such punishment can lead to a cascade of negative effects.

## The result of punishing a cat

- fear and possible aggression because of fear
- stress and a decline in health because of stress (feline physical health is very related to feline emotional health).
- A breakdown in your bond with your pet.

Punishment is not only physical in nature. Verbal punishment - a harsh tone- can also result in increased fear and other deleterious effects as well as inadvertently put extra attention on undesired behavior. Trust your instinct to always treat your cat with respect.



*This article is by Cat Nip for Tuffs University*

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In the last installment of our newsletter, I mentioned that there would be some changes coming. They are here! We have began to sell Sentinel by Merick in our clinic. This product replaces the Iverheart Max chews but they will still be available in our online pharmacy. Sentinel spectrum chews prevents heartworm, flea, treats and controls roundworms, hookworms, tapeworms and whipworms. These are chewable tablets that should be given once a month. Another exciting change is our rebates! Rather than receiving paper rebates when you buy Bravecto or Sentinel you can receive instant rebates right at checkout! These instant rebates are **not available** through online pharmacies. We continue to strive to provide your pet with the best, most cost effective, protection against parasites and diseases they transmit.

**Remember ticks can be out in 30 degree weather!**

**Prices of other things around the clinic have also changed, if this concerns you feel free to ask the cost!**

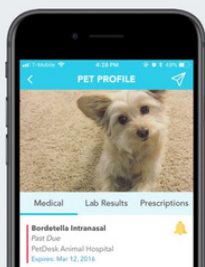
# Upcoming Closure Dates

## MONDAY MARCH 28TH

We are scheduling roughly three weeks in advance for annual exams for surgeries roughly one month.

If your pet needs vaccinations or a appointment please call ahead of time and we will try and get you in as soon as possible!

**Thank you for your patience!**  
**Crookston Pet Clinic Staff**



**Download PetDesk for Free in the App and Google Play Store!**

Make sure to use the email your veterinary provider has on record when you sign-up.



Request Appointment

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