



Louis Siegelman, DDS

pet's & family edition

"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened." – Anatole France

from the dentist

Pets Are Family!



Pets? Wait a minute!

Didn't this newsletter come from my dentist? It sure did! We want to do something fun and different, so this issue is dedicated to pet-companions, and you'll find loving pictures of ours throughout this issue!

The unconditional affection of a beloved pet is like no other. From an enthusiastic tail-wagging greeting at the end of a busy day or the comforting vibration of a purr while watching TV, our pets truly give us the joy from their well-deserved place in our families.

Yours in good dental health,

Dr. Siegelman

Special thanks to Chris Vitola for taking all the photos of Ruby.

Healthy Teeth = Healthy Pets

10 top reasons to brush

Excellent oral care is important for your beloved pet-companions for the same reason it's important for you – prevention of tooth decay, gum disease, and exacerbation of inflammation in the body. Just 2 minutes per day is all it takes!

1. Prevent bad breath which can be a sign of gum disease or tooth decay.
2. Gum disease can lead to heart, kidney, & liver disease.
3. A dog's 42 adult teeth, and a cat's 30, don't grow in until after their milk teeth fall out, potentially leading to tartar buildup and gum irritation if teeth are missing.
4. Oral health is directly linked to overall health. Prevention will save money & emotional grief.
5. You have a good oral health routine. Why shouldn't your pets?
6. 80% of dogs over 3-years-old have some gum disease. Help them out with great at-home oral care and regular vet appointments.
7. Tooth-loss due to decay is painful and dangerous, leaving pets prone to other serious health issues.
8. Keep pain at bay. Animals are good at hiding discomfort until their problems become advanced.
9. Teeth wear out with all that chewing – leaving pets unable to eat well, so give them all the help they can get.
10. Educate yourself! Learn more about your pet's dental care from your vet – your best resource about their oral & overall health.



10 Steps For Teeth-Brushing Success!

1. Initiate the process slowly. Relax and have patience as it may take several attempts.
2. Prime your pet by massaging or gently stroking their cheeks daily.
3. Introduce toothpaste by dabbing it on a treat or letting them lick it off your finger.
4. To begin, ensure they are relaxed and have them sit or lie down.
5. Dab toothpaste on a child's toothbrush and *without brushing*, place it into your dog or cat's mouth for a few seconds. Increase gradually to 15-30 seconds.
6. Once your pet is comfortable, slowly brush one tooth starting at the gumline. Increase gradually to brushing several teeth.
7. Retract the side-lips (creating a smile) and brush the back molars, gradually increasing brushing time.
8. If your pet tolerates only a short time of brushing, concentrate on the upper and lower molars.
9. Gradually increase brushing time to one minute on the upper teeth and one minute on the lower.
10. Praise, praise, praise your pet and make the process fun!



PET TOOTHPASTE:

- Do not use human toothpaste. It's not meant to be swallowed.
- Pet toothpaste is flavored. Favorites are poultry, malt, and seafood.
- The best pet toothpaste contains enzymes to dissolve plaque.
- Choose a sugarless toothpaste without sugar substitutes.

Do Fido & Miss Kitty Have Bad Breath?



Persistent bad breath can indicate oral health concerns or other serious issues. No matter the reason, bad breath is a red flag that requires investigation. Your veterinarian can help pinpoint the cause with a physical exam and if necessary, lab work.

Bad breath treatment depends on the diagnosis. If plaque and gum disease is the culprit, your pet may require a professional cleaning. If it's an issue of diet, you might have to change their food. If the cause is gastrointestinal or related to the liver, kidneys, or lungs, your vet will advise you further.

Seek immediate care if you notice...

1. Unusually sweet or fruity breath – could indicate diabetes.
2. Breath that smells like urine – can be a sign of kidney disease.
3. Yellow-tinged gums and/or eyes, foul breath odor, vomiting, and lack of appetite – could signal liver problems.
4. Tartar build up and red inflamed gums – could be gum disease

which can affect your pet's overall health.

Don't assume that your pet's bad breath is normal – it's not a part of aging. Being proactive about your pet's oral health will make your life together more pleasant ... and it's just smart preventive medicine.



The Cat's Meow!

Family pets are the best

Important social skills like empathy, sharing, responsibility, and caring for others are just a few of the benefits your children will experience with a family pet. In fact, kids with pet(s) are often healthier and have greater self-esteem and cognitive development than those who don't. Other pet plusses include improved social skills, a more harmonious family dynamic, and health benefits from playing and brisk dog walking.

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE GETTING YOUR NEW FAMILY MEMBER:

- When selecting a dog, it's very important to understand their temperament, energy level, and size. Make sure your they will suit your family's lifestyle.
- Pedigree or rescue? Always deal with a reputable breeder or rescue center. Pedigree pooches often have a more predictable temperament, but can have inherent health issues, and mutts can have stronger genes and be more healthy, but their temperament may be unknown. Research the breed, history, and how well socialized the dog is.
- A relaxed cat won't need as much attention as a dog. The short-haired Rex breeds are popular for those with fur or dander allergies.
- When it comes to other options, consider a hamster, gerbil, or rabbit. They don't smell, only take up a small space, and if they're handled from a young age, they're friendly too!



Mike & Ruby

Bring On The Love!

Have you noticed that when you stroke a cat or play with a dog, you relax and your heart feels a little warmer? Scientists have noticed this too and are exploring how animals affect human emotions and physiology. They have learned that owning and handling animals has significant health benefits for young and old alike.

Did you know that independently living older pet owners generally have better physical health and mental well-being than those who don't own a pet? These seniors tend to be more active, cope better with stress, have better overall health, and experience significantly lower blood pressure than their contemporaries without pets.

How do seniors benefit from pets?



- Pets need to be petted and played with – activities that require interaction with their human companions. Pets also require feeding, watering, and grooming. This benefits their owner's cardiovascular health and keeps joints limber and flexible, which helps pet owners more easily carry out the activities of daily living. Dogs need to be walked which provides their humans an opportunity to go out and interact with others daily.
- Pets help the elderly by providing physical contact, companionship, and love. For those without family or close friends nearby, pets buffer against social isolation.
- Pets give older people a sense of purpose – a reason to get up in the morning and stick to regular routines such as regular waking times, grocery shopping, and jaunts outside, all which contribute to eating and sleeping regularly and well.

Both people and pets have a lot to offer each other, sharing time and affection, leading to fuller and happier lives.

Healthy Snacks For Our Furry Friends

Have you ever wondered if there's a healthy alternative to pre-packaged pet treats? Here are some healthy and tasty snacks that your fur-babies will thank you for!

10 Snacks For Your Happy Dog

- 1. Cottage Cheese** – Non-fat low-sodium cottage cheese is a great choice.
- 2. Sweet Potato** – A great source of vitamins and fiber.
- 3. Baby Carrots** – High in beta carotene for a healthy coat.
- 4. Apples** – Filled with vitamins and fiber, apples are healthy snacks, but definitely cut away the stem and seeds first – they're toxic!
- 5. Green Beans** – Filled with vitamins C and K and manganese, a perfect low-cal snack.
- 6. Eggs** – Hard-boiled eggs ... perfect protein, selenium, and riboflavin. *Never* serve raw.
- 7. Yogurt** – Always choose low-fat plain yogurt for a healthy source of calcium. Some dogs are lactose-intolerant, so introduce slowly and sparingly.
- 8. Rice Cakes** – A crunchy, tasty, and healthy treat, stick with plain unflavored ones.
- 9. Banana Chips** – Great for training your dog and can have a few too!



- 10. Peanut Butter** – The all-time classic and dogs love it! It's healthy, but like all snacks, too much of a good thing is a bad thing.

10 Treat Tips For Your Healthy Cat



- 1. Moderation** – Cats can develop a taste for treats and avoid their own food.
- 2. Limit people food** – Cat food is specially formulated to meet your cat's nutritional needs for good health.
- 3. Avoid toxic foods** – Raisins, grapes, onions, alcohol, salt, and tea can be toxic to your cat.
- 4. Ban begging** – When giving your cat a treat, avoid doing it at the dinner table when you're eating or at kitty's insistence.
- 5. Cat treats add calories** – Fast weight gain can be dangerous, so remember ... treats should be few and far between.
- 6. Catnip** – A member of the mint family, catnip is a wonderful occasional treat for cats over 6 months of age.
- 7. Use treat-time for fun and fitness** – Treats can help train your cat in agility exercises or tricks.
- 8. Apologize with cat treats** – After an unpleasant experience, treats will soothe an unhappy feline.
- 9. Treats don't replace love** – Cats require physical contact like playing, petting, and holding.
- 10. Natural cat cookies** – Cooked liver, fish, or eggs are great and you know exactly what they're eating.

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TO US – DON'T BE
AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS!