

## The Stages of Periodontal Disease

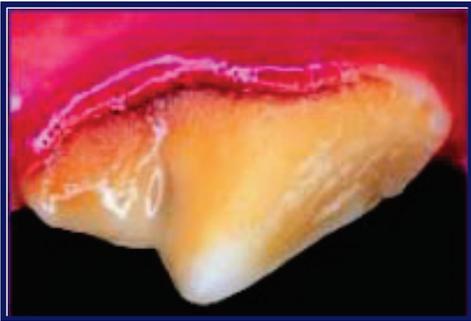
Periodontal disease is the progressive medical condition that is caused by the inflammation of the structures surrounding the teeth, namely the gums, periodontal ligament, and the bone that holds the teeth in place. Periodontal disease progresses through several stages of severity.

### Stage 1 Periodontal Disease: Gingivitis



- Inflammation of the gums caused by a buildup of bacterial plaque and tartar on the tooth
- Symptoms may include a small amount of tartar and some redness of the gums.
- Treatment consists of a dental cleaning that involves removing plaque and tartar and polishing the teeth.
- This is the best stage to address oral health as no permanent changes have occurred.
- This is the only stage where a simple “teeth cleaning” is sufficient to keep the mouth healthy.

### Stage 2 Periodontal Disease: Advanced Gingivitis / Early Periodontitis



- Characterized by debris beneath the gum line, as well as redness and swelling of the gums.
- Pockets are starting to form under the gum line, trapping food and bacteria.
- Once this stage begins to damage the tissues surrounding the teeth, it is irreversible and professional treatment is usually needed every 6-12 months.
- Treatment is similar to that for Stage 1, but in addition, plaque and debris below the gum line must be removed. Antibiotic treatment of any larger pockets is performed.
- As stage 2 advances, up to 25% of the bone around the tooth roots can be lost due to the chronic inflammation of the tissues.

### Stage 3 Periodontal Disease: Severe Periodontitis



- The most serious form of periodontal disease.
- More debris is present beneath the gum line and there is large pocket formation. The pet will have significant redness and swelling and may have loose or missing teeth.
- At Grade 3, a pet has experienced more than a 30 percent loss of bone that supports the teeth.
- This stage of disease is irreversible. Advanced gum treatment is necessary stop infection and save the teeth.
- Treatments include deep treatment of pockets and antibiotic deposit into pockets
- Any teeth that have lost over 50% of their bone support will need to be extracted.
- Pets with this stage of gum disease will require long term diligent home care and regular professional treatment.