

Periodontal Disease Causes Dogs' to Lose Teeth

A thorough cleaning and X-rays reveal dogs' treatment needs.

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Q. I just read your response to "Dog's Teeth Are Falling Out." My dog, a 5-year-old Cairn Terrier-Shih Tzu-Poodle mix, recently had two front bottom teeth fall out and has another loose one. We took him to the vet, however, she said that his teeth and gums look healthy. She wanted to schedule a cleaning anyway so they could take X-rays. Do you think the cleaning is necessary since his teeth and gums do appear to be healthy? Do you have any idea as to what else could be causing this?

A. Some breeds of dogs, especially Poodles and Poodle mixes, are genetically prone to severe periodontal disease. This severe gum infection is often only apparent with a detailed oral exam under anesthesia.

Most likely your dog's teeth are falling out due to undetected periodontal disease. General anesthesia, a thorough dental exam, and X-rays will confirm this diagnosis, and allow your veterinarian to begin appropriate treatment.

Pain medications and antibiotics will most likely help your dog feel much better, and hopefully help preserve the rest of his teeth.