

The Changing Face of Doggie Dental Health

Advancements in veterinary technology and education have led to increased attention to dog dental health, report shows.

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Pet dental health has evolved from an occasional teeth cleaning or removal at the vet's office to comprehensive dental plans and treatments that have blossomed along with advances in veterinary technology and education, according to a report in the Dec. 15, 2007, issue of the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

"The days of clean-and-pull or watchful waiting in the case of fractured teeth have been replaced by prevention, recognition and treatment of dental disease and painful oral conditions," said Sharon Hoffman, veterinarian and lead author of the study.

Advances in veterinary dentistry have begun to dispel rumors, including those that say broken teeth in pets are not that big of deal, Hoffman said.

"We now know the pain of a fractured tooth is just as severe as it is in people," she explains. "Pets with fractured teeth will still eat, they will still work, but they will do so in pain."

Hoffman recommends that pets have an oral exam every time they visit the veterinarian, as pet owners should not underestimate the importance of a dog's oral health.

"Oral health is important – in both people and animals," Hoffman said. "Oral disease is the most prevalent disease in pets. It is the leading cause of mouth pain, and it can be the sign of other underlying medical issues."

For step-by-step instructions for brushing a dog's teeth, [click here](#).