

Quick Tips: Annual Dental Checkups

Annual checkups are key to your cat's dental health. Here's what you can expect during the vet visit.

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Cats and kittens receiving adequate dental care at home require fewer trips to the veterinary hospital for checkups and cleanings. However, your cat's teeth should be checked by your veterinarian at least once at his annual exam and more often if he has a history of dental disease. It's probably a good idea to ask your veterinarian to check your cat's teeth each time he visits the clinic for any reason. Some cats rarely need dental cleaning, while others may require the procedure every six months.

In most cases, your cat will receive anesthesia so the veterinarian and veterinary technician can do a thorough job of examining his mouth, taking dental X-rays and cleaning his teeth. Modern anesthetics are much safer than those available only a few years ago, but anesthesia is still stressful, particularly for older cats or cats with compromised health. Don't wait until your cat is old and his teeth are rotten before scheduling his first dental checkup and cleaning.