



ANIMAL DENTAL SPECIALISTS OF UPSTATE NEW YORK

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REASONS FOR PROMPT DENTISTRY REFERRAL DURING COVID-19

- **Jaw fractures**
 - Injuries still happen, and these patients should be referred promptly. A tape muzzle may be applied until the patient can be treated.
- **Acutely fractured teeth**
 - A fractured deciduous tooth in a puppy or kitten, whether acutely fractured or discolored and non-vital, should be extracted immediately. Fractured puppy teeth have been associated with an increased risk of tetanus if the non-vital pulp becomes contaminated by *Clostridium tetani* bacteria.
 - Permanent teeth in a dog or cat less than 1 year of age – pulp exposure in an immature tooth needs treatment within 48 hours to save the tooth. If extraction is the owner's preference, then pain meds should be given until a procedure can be scheduled.
 - Acute fractures of permanent teeth in a mature dog or cat are painful and should be treated promptly.
- **Facial swelling**
 - A dog or cat that has facial swelling is often in pain and should be evaluated as an emergency. Dental fractures may require extraction or endodontic therapy. If you need help choosing, please reach out to us with a photo of the tooth.
- **Oral masses**
 - Rapidly growing oral masses (in any age animal!) need a biopsy and intraoral radiographs as soon as possible. If a maxillectomy or mandibulectomy is necessary, these will be performed promptly.
- **Traumatically luxated teeth**
 - Traumatically luxated or avulsed teeth must be replaced and stabilized under anesthesia within 48 hours if the tooth is going to be saved.
- **Animals that are hungry but unwilling to eat due to oral pain**
 - Animals with periodontal disease and mobile teeth may or may not be an emergency. Although a chronic condition, treatment may be emergent if acute-on-chronic pain causes unwillingness or inability to eat.
 - Cats and dogs with stomatitis may need to be handled as emergency surgery. A temporary feeding tube is often placed to provide nutritional support following surgery.
 - Cats with resorptive lesions are usually not an emergency unless the cat is unwilling to eat due to pain.
- **Cleft palate**
 - These patients often have time-sensitive surgical needs. Please ask for advice.
- **Malocclusions**
 - Young patients have time-sensitive needs and those will be managed promptly.
 - Older patients with chronic malocclusion are not considered to be emergent unless oronasal communication has occurred.

*There may be other valid reasons for an emergent dental referral.
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office for guidance.*