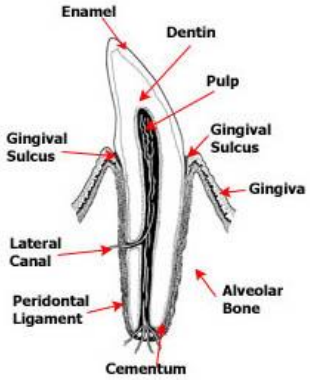
Tooth Resorption in Cats

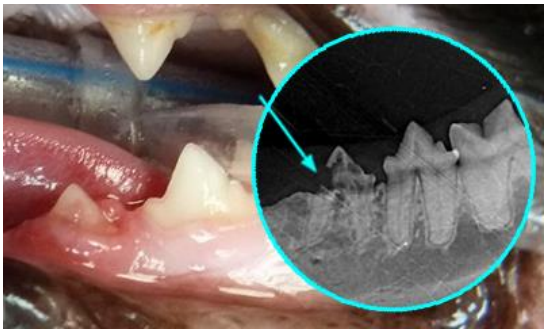


Many cats appear perfectly happy and healthy to their owners but unfortunately are living with a very painful and problematic mouth! These same cats can be suffering from Tooth Resorption – a serious condition causing the teeth the resorb, dissolve and in some cases break.

Within each of a cat's teeth is a chamber (root canal) that contains tissue which communicates with the rest of the body! This tissue made up of blood vessels, lymphatic vessels, and nerves, which is surrounded by dentin. This dentin makes up the bulk of the tooth's structure.

What is tooth resorption?
Feline Tooth Resorption is a common and painful condition found in domestic cats.
In this condition the dentin in a single tooth (or several simultaneously) erodes and is eventually destroyed. Tooth Resorption, or 'TR' affects an estimated 20-60% of all cats and is seen in a growing percentage of close to 75% of cats 5 years of age or over. Tooth resorption also occurs in dogs and even people but is much less common.

How is it diagnosed?



Most cats with TR will generally appear normal, as the condition has to get to an extreme level before the cat stops eating. You may notice your cat prefers to chew on one side, salivates excessively, prefers soft food, spots grooming, or swallows food without chewing. As TR progresses, some cats will develop bad-tempered or aggressive attitudes and lack a normal appetite. Dental x-rays are the only way to diagnose TR, as x-rays show changes in the density of the roots and crowns of the teeth.

What causes it?
For now, we don't have an answer. There are theories that excess vitamin D could be a cause, but other researchers don't agree. Just one of the many mysteries of our feline friends!

How is it treated?
At this time there is no effective treatment that can save the pet's teeth! Any tooth that is showing any signs of resorption should be extracted! But just the removal of these painful teeth can bring back your friendly and loving cat.

How can I prevent it?
Early recognition through annual comprehensive oral exams with intraoral probing and dental x-rays is the best strategy for your furry friend! Cats are highly functional despite pain, so owners are often unaware they are experiencing discomfort. But regular visits to Vet HQ can help identify early issues, so book a thorough oral examination for your pet today!!

Dr Ashley Harrison [DVM]