

NEW FOREST VETERINARY DENTAL SERVICE

REFERRAL VETERINARY DENTISTRY AND ORAL SURGERY

Chronic Gingivostomatitis

Chronic Gingivostomatitis is a common disease that affects mostly cats. It is also known as *Faucitis* or *Lymphocytic plasmocytic stomatitis*, but all of these are just descriptive terms and are not an actual diagnosis. It is a poorly understood condition that seems to be linked to certain viral infections. Cats infected with these viruses seem to develop an inappropriately severe reaction to plaque present on teeth.

Diagnosis

The diagnosis of Chronic Gingivostomatitis is made by examination of the mouth. It is characterised by severe inflammation of the gums around the teeth and the mucosal lining of the mouth which can extend into the back of the cat's mouth. The inflamed gums will often bleed, there is usually an unpleasant smell and the cats will often be salivating. As the condition is painful, some cats will stop eating, lose body condition and coat quality.

Treatment

The first stage of treatment will involve a blood sample to assess any other underlying cause of this disease. It will also involve assessment of viral infections which can be done by blood sampling and swabbing of the mouth. After this, the patient will be anaesthetised and a full examination of the mouth, including x-rays of all the teeth will be made to assess any concurrent dental disease.

The current recommended treatment is extraction of all teeth affected by periodontal disease, plus all of the premolars and molars. Sometimes, extraction of the canine teeth and incisors is also required. It is essential that all of the teeth and their roots are extracted, otherwise the inflammation will persist. This requires x-rays to be taken after the extractions to ensure that all of the tooth structures have been removed. This procedure demands a high level of skill and should only be undertaken by a veterinary surgeon with suitable experience and equipment to deal with these cases. Cats cope very well after these dental extractions, and are usually much more comfortable after the procedure. They will usually continue to eat all types of food even after their teeth have been extracted.

Sometimes, these extractions are not enough to successfully treat these cases, and additional medical treatment may be required.