

Tooth Resorption (TR) in Cats

Veterinary Dentistry and Oral Surgery of Rhode Island

Client and Patient Education Sheet

Definition:

Tooth Resorption is the most common dental disease in domestic cats, with 75% of cats developing TR in their lifetime. TR in cats is progressive and continues until the roots are completely resorbed or the crown breaks off leaving an open wound and root remnants. The disease is characterized by tooth tissue being broken down by the cat's own cells.

Tooth resorption is the gradual loss of the crown and roots of the tooth often leading to the teeth becoming weak and in some cases fracturing. The changes can sometimes be subtle and an exam and imaging under anesthesia is needed to definitively diagnose tooth resorption in some teeth.

Causes: The cause of tooth resorption is unknown despite multiple studies investigating the disease. There have been many causes associated with possible increased risks, but no clear cause has been found to result in tooth resorption.

Symptoms of TR

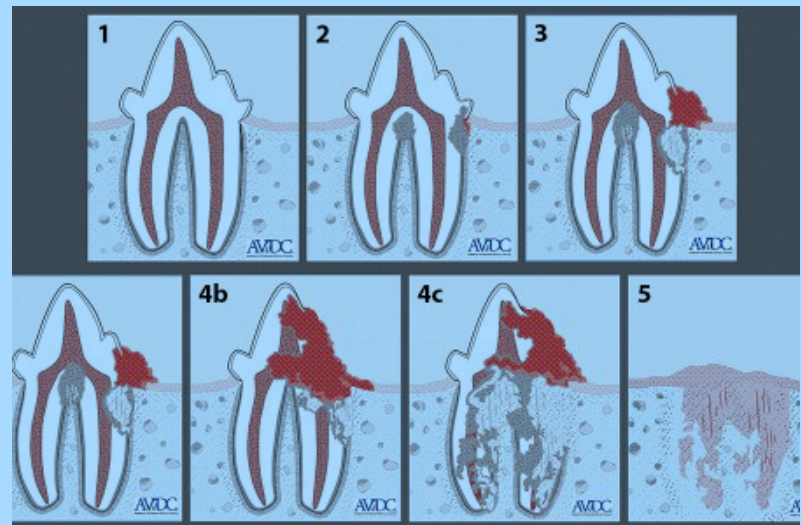
- There may be no symptoms
- Excessive drooling
- Reluctance to eat hard food
- Oral Pain is possible
- Repetitive lower jaw movement
- Dropping food
- Halitosis (foul breath)
- Avoiding food and weight loss
- Head shaking
- Excessive tongue movement

Diagnosis

-Thorough Oral Exam

-Dental x-rays and Cone Beam CT allow for visualization of the root structure to determine the degree of bone loss below the gum line.

-There are 5 stages of Tooth Resorption, ranging from mild dental hard tissue loss to extensive dental tissue loss and to only remnants of hard tissue being visible.



Treatment: Dental Extractions

For early stage lesions monitoring may be advised, though progression should be anticipated.

The treatment of choice for tooth resorption is complete extraction being careful to fully remove roots