

Gingival Hyperplasia

Gingival hyperplasia is a term used to describe a relatively common condition of the gums in dogs or cats. What you observe is essentially an overgrowth (or enlargement) of the gum tissue. The gum may appear to be growing up over the crown of the tooth or it may look like your pet's teeth are getting smaller as less of the crown (part of the tooth above the gum) is visible when you look in the mouth. It may be affecting a single tooth or up to all of the teeth. Many patients are genetically predisposed, however, it may also be caused by or aggravated by periodontal disease or a variety of medications such as Cyclosporine, calcium channel blockers and Phenobarbital.

The result of this and what creates a clinical problem for the pet is that a deeper than normal periodontal pocket (pseudo pocket) forms around the animal's tooth. This deeper pocket traps debris and bacteria that can lead to inflammation and periodontal disease. Sometimes the overgrowth can be so severe that the pet will start to chew on the tissue. This is painful for the pet and could lead to infection or decreased appetite.

If your dog or cat appears to have this condition, it's important they receive evaluation and treatment from a qualified veterinary professional. Removal of the excess tissue (gingivoplasty) helps restore a more normal gingival margin, helps control infection and is healthier for the pet.

On occasion, the gingival overgrowth could be something more concerning. It is not unusual to have cancerous lesions associated with the gingival proliferations. These are usually represented by focal areas of even more prominent gingival enlargements. An evaluation by a veterinary dental specialist is recommended.

To the right you see some pictures of our technician Kara's furry baby, Pandora.

She was suffering from this very same condition, and now is feeling much better – now she takes her time and enjoys her meals.

