

Policy Statement: The Use of Antibiotics in Veterinary Dentistry

Adopted by the Board of Directors, April 2005

The AVDC endorses the use of systemic antibiotics in veterinary dentistry for treatment of some infectious conditions of the oral cavity. Although culture and susceptibility testing is rarely performed on individual patients that have an infection extending from/to the oral cavity, the selection of an appropriate antibiotic should be based on published data regarding susceptibility testing of the spectra of known oral pathogens.

Patients that are scheduled for an oral procedure may benefit from pre-treatment with an appropriate antibiotic to improve the health of infected oral tissues.

Bacteremia is a recognized sequela to dental scaling and other oral procedures. Healthy animals are able to overcome this bacteremia without the use of systemic antibiotics. However, use of a systemically administered antibiotic is recommended to reduce bacteremia for animals that are immune compromised, have underlying systemic disease (such as clinically-evident cardiac, hepatic, and renal diseases) and/or when severe oral infection is present.

Antibiotics should never be considered a monotherapy for treatment of oral infections, and should not be used as preventive management of oral conditions.