

Feline Chronic Gingivostomatitis

Heidi B. Lobprise, DVM, DAVDC

Main Street Veterinary Hospital & Dental Clinic
Flower Mound, Texas

Stomatitis can refer to any inflammation in the oral cavity, but, clinically, it typically refers to the exaggerated immune response of some cats to minimal accumulations of plaque and calculus. In contrast, when such irritants accumulate on the teeth of relatively normal cats, periodontal disease with loss of tissue (eg, gingiva, bone) may occur.

It is important to identify cases with just alveolar and labial/buccal mucositis and no caudal mucositis. If these patients respond to adequate Phase I treatment (ie, complete cleaning and polishing, radiographs, and select extractions), stomatitis is unlikely.

Patients with caudal mucositis in the area bordered medially by the palatoglossal folds and fauces (formerly termed *faucitis*, which is less accurate) generally will not respond to Phase I treatment; Phase II intervention (ie, caudal mouth extractions, complete removal of all remaining premolars and molars, and debridement of inflamed tissues [eg, friable gingival margins and alve-

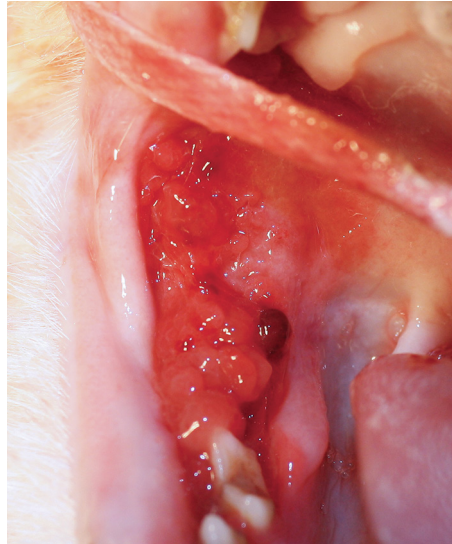


▲ **FIGURE 1** Significant alveolar and labial/buccal mucositis, likely associated with advanced periodontal disease, in a 5-year-old neutered male domestic shorthair cat. Radiographs are recommended to evaluate for any changes (eg, tooth resorption).

olar ridges]) is often recommended. Incisors can also be removed, but, unless there is significant inflammation or bone loss, the canine teeth are kept because of the additional surgical time and expense required for full-mouth extractions and/or owner preference to preserve the canines.



▲ **FIGURE 2** Caudal mouth from the patient in *Figure 1* showing no inflammation. The patient either has periodontal disease or less advanced feline chronic gingivostomatitis.



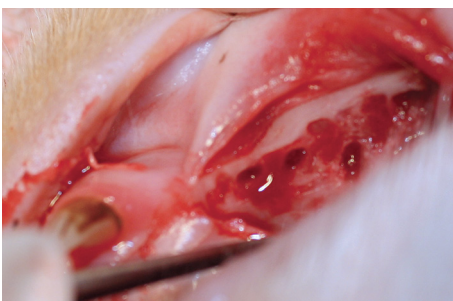
▲ **FIGURE 3** Caudal mucositis in a 2-year-old neutered male domestic medium-hair cat. Caudal mucositis is indicative of more advanced feline chronic gingivostomatitis and carries a more guarded prognosis. At minimum, caudal mouth extractions should be performed.



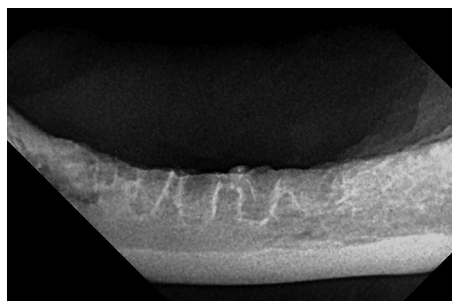
▲ **FIGURE 4** Caudal mouth extractions (left mandible) with gingival flaps, sectioning of teeth, and removal of all premolars and molars in the patient in *Figure 3*



▲ **FIGURE 5** Radiograph of left mandible with extensive bone loss in the patient in *Figures 3* and *4*



▲ **FIGURE 6** In addition to complete extractions, all inflamed soft and osseous tissues must be debrided via alveoplasty with a diamond bur.



▲ **FIGURE 7** Radiograph of left mandible of the patient in *Figures 3-5* after extractions and alveoplasty

Suggested Reading

American Veterinary Dental College. Nomenclature: oral pathology – inflammatory, neoplastic, other lesions. AVDC website. https://www.avdc.org/Nomenclature/Nomen-Oral_Pathology.html. Accessed November 20, 2017.

Jennings MW, Lewis JR, Soltero-Rivera MM, Brown DC, Reiter Am. Effect of tooth extraction on stomatitis in cats: 95 cases (2000-2013). *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2015;246(6):654-660.