



PAWSITIVE PRESS

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Unlikely Culprit: Stick Stuck in Dog's Mouth Mimics Seizures

BY JACQUI OLSON, DVM, MSTCVM

In the world of veterinary medicine, emergencies are a part of our daily routine. Recently, our clinic encountered a particularly perplexing case involving a small furry friend named Tika.

Tika arrived at our clinic accompanied by her worried owners, who suspected she was experiencing seizures. Tika's symptoms were concerning: sudden onset manic pawing, trembling, excessive drooling, and significant distress. Naturally, her family feared the worst, suspecting a seizure disorder and envisioning the challenges ahead for Tika.

1

FEATURED

Unlikely Culprit

2

TECH TALK

Dental Care for Your Pet

3

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...Unlikely Culprit Cont...

Tika was rushed back to our doctors and technicians who quickly jumped into action. However, some of Tika's symptoms didn't quite fit with what we normally see with seizures. She was coming in and out of these episodes with no cues leading to the onset or periods of disorientation afterwards (called the pro-dromal and post-ictal periods) which are typical for seizures. She also was not losing consciousness during these fits. Upon closer examination, the unexpected cause of Tika's condition was discovered. It wasn't epilepsy or any neurological disorder causing her distress. Instead, a seemingly harmless stick had become lodged in the roof of Tika's mouth, setting off manic episodes of distress that mimicked some of the symptoms of seizures.

How did such a predicament come to be? Tika had likely been gleefully gnawing on the stick, unwittingly positioning it in a way that caused it to become firmly wedged between her carnassial teeth (two of the largest teeth in the mouth). Consequently, discomfort ensued, triggering Tika's alarming symptoms.

Thankfully, once the true culprit was identified, we were able to sedate Tika and safely remove the stick with no injury to her teeth or palate. Much to Tika's (and her owner's) relief the ordeal was over as quick as it had begun and with no need for long term medications or treatment.

This case underscores the importance of a thorough physical examination and how quick action from our team can rapidly assess and treat pets during times of crisis. At the Animal Hospital of Dunedin we are ready to triage and stabilize many emergencies - from trauma to respiratory distress and seizures to a wayward stick.

And while we hope for fewer stick-related mishaps in the future, we cherish the opportunity to continue to serve pets like Tika and their devoted families.

**Tika was
rushed back to
our doctors
and technicians
who quickly
jumped into
action.**

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TECHTALK

BY KATIE FISHER & HANNAH SWAUGER

Why is it Important for Your Pet to Have Clean Teeth?

Just like humans, dogs and cats can accumulate plaque which then turns to tarter or calculus. **Tarter can build-up above and below the gum line**, once it is under the gum line the chance of periodontal disease increases. Along with periodontal disease other dental issues can arise such as gingival (gum) recession, bone loss, and/or a tooth can become mobile. These issues can cause pain to occur in your pet's mouth, making it difficult to enjoy their food. Bad mouth odor can also be a

sign that a dental procedure is needed. Please reach out if you have any additional questions or need to book a dental procedure!

FUNFACT

Did you know that canines have 42 teeth compared to felines who only have 30 teeth!

What Happens During a Dental Procedure?

During your pets dental procedure, radiographs, cleaning, polishing and examination of the oral cavity will take place. Radiographs are taken to better visualize and understand what is happening below the gum line. Cleaning is done by surgical technicians, using an ultrasonic scaler to help tackle that pesky tarter. Polishing is then done to seal the tooth and any micro etches left by the ultrasonic scaler. Finally, the veterinarian probes and examines the oral cavity looking for any imperfections.

