

Instrument Consideration for Oral Surgery

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All operations are made easier by having the right tool for the job, and oral surgery is no exception.

In selecting the most useful instruments for oral surgery, the operator must bear in mind that more precise surgery can be performed with finer and more delicate instruments. Superior technique is always preferred to brute force. Proper instruments definitely enhance technique, but are not a substitute for it.



The choice of instrumentation is in many ways a matter of personal preference. However, it is wise to be aware of the array of new and improved instruments available for oral surgery in animals. Whatever the instrument chosen, it is imperative to remember that it cannot perform to its full potential if it is not properly maintained and kept sharp. Oral surgical instruments must be cared for just as well as the finest orthopedic instruments or they will have a

shortened, and much less useful, life.

Many instrument manufacturers are carrying root elevators, periosteal elevators, root tip picks, dissecting scissors, etc., which were previously not available in the veterinary market. It is important to have instruments that are not mere adaptations from human dentistry, but rather instruments designed for our canine patients and for the smaller, more delicate teeth of cats. It would benefit most practitioners to reconsider the crude instrumentation that may have been inherited and passed down in their practices.

It is helpful to group instruments for oral surgery and periodontal therapy into packs. There are many cassettes and setup trays available to hold the instruments and keep them organized and easy to access. Wrapping instruments individually for sterilization and subsequent use is time-consuming and expensive. The basic packs required for every surgical extraction are the flap pack and the root elevator pack. When we add periodontal therapy to the procedure to preserve those teeth that are compromised but do not require extraction, the periodontal pack is crucial.

Magnification instruments are other invaluable tools that aid one's ability to accurately identify oral pathology, assist in the procedure and evaluate the quality of work performed. In addition, good quality surgical lights are essential to maximize visibility.

It is vital to remember that the judge of success of the surgical tooth extraction process or the periodontal procedure is not the condition of the removed material, but rather the condition of what remains within the mouth.