

Wobbly teeth in cats

Overview

Kittens start to lose their baby teeth from about 3 months old - they fall out and are replaced by adult teeth. Adult cats shouldn't have wobbly teeth, if you notice any it's a sign that something is wrong. If a tooth becomes diseased and wobbly it can be very painful, especially when eating. Wobbly teeth usually need removing by a vet under anaesthetic.

Book your cat in for a check-up if you notice they have loose or wobbly teeth.

How will I know if my cat has a wobbly tooth?

It's not easy – our feline friends don't usually like us looking in their mouths! You may notice:

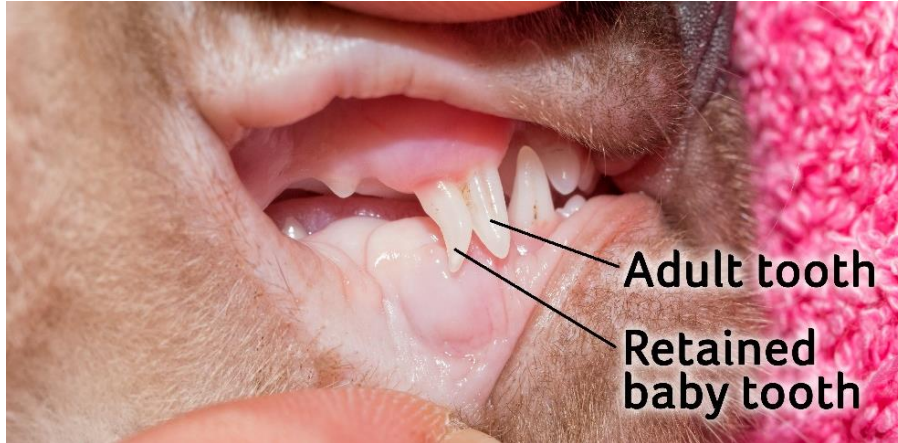
- A tooth at an odd angle
- They can't shut their mouth
- Wanting to eat but then walking away from food
- Trouble eating or dropping food
- Drooling
- Mouth pain (pawing at the mouth or only eating on one side of their mouth)

Why is my cat's tooth wobbly?

It's not normal for adult cats to lose their teeth. So, what can cause a tooth to become wobbly?

Baby teeth

Kittens' teeth normally start to fall out at about at about 3 months old. This is completely normal, they will be replaced by permanent adult teeth.



THIS CAT'S BABY TOOTH SHOULD HAVE FALLEN OUT BEFORE HIS ADULT TOOTH CAME THROUGH

Tooth and gum disease

Tooth and gum disease usually starts with tartar on the teeth. If the tartar isn't removed, inflammation and infection will develop. Inflammation and infection weaken attachments and this eventually leads to wobbly teeth. Teeth don't always fall out when they are wobbly. Some will stay in for many years causing pain and discomfort.

Tooth disease, i.e. a broken tooth or tooth root infections will cause them to loosen.

Injury

Road traffic accidents, bumping into something, falls, chewing on a hard objects (rare for cats) – can all lead to tooth damage.

Dropped canines

As a cat gets older, their canines (fangs at the front) often drop down. The ligaments connecting the teeth to the bone get old and worn. This can make them look like they have grown but in reality they are wobbly and probably painful – they are likely to need removal.

Tumours in the mouth

Cancer in the jaw bone or gums can damage the structures that should hold the teeth firmly in place.

When to contact your vet

Wobbly teeth are very painful! If you notice your cat has a loose tooth, make an appointment to see your vet. Your cat is likely to need a general anaesthetic and the tooth removed, but your vet will be able to talk through the options with you and find the best solution for your cat.

You know your cat best. If you are concerned it's always best to contact your vet.

Preventing dental disease

Don't forget the old saying: 'Prevention is better than cure'. You can't always protect your cat from injury, but you can help them to avoid dental disease. The best way to do this is regularly brushing their teeth using a pet toothpaste. However, if you don't think your cat will tolerate this, talk to your vet or vet nurse about other preventive measures, such as special dental diets, additives for water and tartar dissolving gels.

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