

## DENTAL NERVE BLOCKS

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Lidocaine and bupivacaine are the agents most commonly used for dogs and cats. Bupivacaine is a local anesthetic that is longer-lasting and more potent than lidocaine. Lidocaine is characterized by rapid (5 to 10 minute) onset, but a short duration of 60-90 minutes. In contrast, bupivacaine takes approximately 20 minutes to achieve effect, but provides 4 to 6 hours of analgesia.

Mandibular and maxillary nerve blocks provide excellent analgesia for pain anywhere in the muzzle. Tooth extraction is the obvious indication for these blocks but they are also quite effective for gingival surgery, mandibulectomy, maxillectomy, jaw fracture repairs, nasal surgery or biopsy. Small amounts of bupivacaine (not to exceed 1cc of 0.5% bupivacaine per 10lbs of body weight) are injected near or into the infraorbital and mandibular foramina anesthetizing the main nerve branches. This technique is relatively easy to perform by a skilled veterinary technician and has minimal associated risks.

