

AT HOME DENTAL CARE FOR YOUR PET

Routine dental care is very important to keeping your pet healthy. The most common disease in cats and dogs is periodontal disease. Periodontal disease can not only affect the health of your pet's mouth, but it can also affect the health of your pet's internal organs. Certain kidney, liver, lung, and heart diseases can result from periodontal disease.

It is ideal to start brushing between 8-12 weeks of age. Your pet's teeth should be brushed on a daily basis because it doesn't take long before plaque mineralizes and becomes tartar. Practice each of the steps below over a few days or weeks. Never use excessive force or restraint.

- Start by acclimating your pet to having your pet's mouth handled and touched. Massage muzzle, lift up your pet's lips, and open your pet's mouth while rewarding with verbal praise and treats.



- Once the pet feels comfortable with his/her mouth being manipulated, gradually introduce the flavored toothpaste. Place a small amount on your finger and let your pet lick it as a reward. Slowly start to rub your pet's gums and teeth.
- Finally, you can gradually introduce the toothbrush. Hold the brush at a 45 degree angle to the tooth and brush back and forth, focusing on the gum line and moving to the tip of the tooth. Begin with a few teeth at a time and then slowly incorporate your pet's entire mouth.

Ideally, your pet will start to look forward to teeth brushing. Following a consistent dental home care program will significantly improve your pet's dental and whole body health while reducing the need for professional cleanings and painful tooth decay/loss.