

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR PET FOLLOWING A DENTAL CLEANING



During a dental procedure, each tooth is cleaned with an ultrasonic dental scaler, polished, and treated with a sealer. Your pet now enjoys the comfort that we do when we go to the dentist. The alarming fact is, **tartar or plaque will begin reforming just a few days after a professional cleaning.** We would like to relay a few ways you can delay that process and give your pet a healthier mouth, with the added benefit of reduced mouth odor.

Many of us are conscientious when it comes to our own family's teeth. We brush, floss and see our dentist regularly. That's good, sound preventive care. Your pet will also feel much better with good dental care and will be less prone to a number of diseases. An oral examination is included each year with annual wellness examinations, so your dog or cat can retain a bright smile. We will also send you a reminder when your pet is due for his or her next cleaning.

Some pets (especially small breed dogs) form tartar much more quickly than others. We humans are born with different factors in our saliva that make us more or less prone to tartar, and the same is true for dogs and cats. The hardness of the enamel on the teeth also varies between pets. Crowded teeth in brachycephalic pets become infected more often. Diet can make a big difference, too. Good dental care is much more critical for small pets and those who build up tartar more quickly.

The professional cleaning your pet received will last much longer if at-home dental care is instituted. Daily brushing is best; if you don't brush at least twice weekly, the benefit will be minimal. We recommend using a paste approved by the Veterinary Oral Health Council.

We like the brand CET for both dental chews and tooth paste. Most pets like the malt, mint, or poultry flavors. CET is non-foaming, antibacterial, oxygenating and contains enzymes to reduce formation of new tartar. Your pet is more likely to allow you to brush with a product of this nature, especially with the soft bristle brush or finger brush designed for pets.

The outer surfaces of the teeth should be brushed at the gum line **starting five days after the dental cleaning. If extractions were performed, wait until the doctor tells you your pet's gums have healed enough to be comfortable when brushed.** Start by doing just one tooth, or by gently rubbing some toothpaste onto the teeth, accompanied by lavish praise or treats. Increase the number of teeth brushed each time, and before long your pet will probably permit all of the teeth to be brushed. Remember, concentrate on the outer surfaces; the tongue brushes the inner surfaces.

The more dental care you are willing or able to provide your pet at home, the healthier his or her mouth will be and the less likely tartar build-up will progress to gingivitis and bone loss. However, you will never be able to completely stop the formation of tartar, any more than regular tooth brushing prevents your own teeth from needing to be cleaned. Home

care helps a lot, but it's not a miracle cure. We can't expect you to brush your pet's teeth after every meal or snack, not all the teeth are easily reachable with a toothbrush, and not every pet will allow their teeth to be brushed. Do the best you can, but we cannot guarantee that your pet will never need extractions or gum treatments.

Look for the VOHC seal on any dental home care product you purchase. If approved by the veterinary Oral Health Council, you know the product has been tested in clinical trials and we know it works.

Tooth brushing desensitization video by Emily Larlham (Kikopup):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6G9IBQRsiW0>

If your pet won't permit brushing, consider tartar prevention diets and treats, water additives such as Healthy Mouth™ or Tartarshield DentaTabs™, and more frequent cleanings here at the hospital. See our dental products page. The links and QR codes below have helpful demonstrations if you haven't brushed your pets' teeth before.

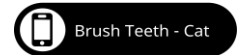
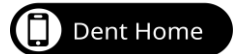
BFVC Dental Home Care video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQb8C9HKQUU>

Brushing a Cat's Teeth video:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA4sNr_Vln8

WHAT IF MY PET HAS PERIODONTAL DISEASE?

If your pet has early periodontal disease or needed extractions, he or she is at high risk for losing more teeth in the future. You will need to be extra vigilant and work extra hard to prevent as much plaque and tartar as you can. Here's how:

- 1) Don't wait too long between cleanings. The teeth should be cleaned when mild to moderate tartar is present.
- 2) If a thin, red line appears along the gum line, periodontal disease is present and a dental cleaning is likely needed. Bad breath is another sign of dental infection.
- 3) Provide home care but be realistic. It's very common for us to have to extract multiple teeth even when owners are working hard to provide good care. If your pet had extractions today chances are good more will eventually be needed. In dogs, the smallest teeth are the hardest to brush and the ones most likely to become infected. Dogs don't use their tiny incisor or back molar teeth to chew with, so tartar control food and treats don't do these teeth much good. Infection may continue to progress despite all our efforts.
- 4) Many pet owners worry about whether their pet will be able to chew when missing some teeth. Your pet will function and feel better once infected teeth are gone. When bone loss is severe or the tooth is loose, it is too far gone to save and the pet is much better off without it. Infected teeth are painful and continue to spread infection elsewhere. If we can save a tooth with oral antibiotics or subgingival antibiotic gel we will, but loose or badly infected teeth need to be removed.



Caring People Helping Pets



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VOHC PRODUCT LIST 2021



There are many pet dental care products available today, but only certain products are clinically proven to work and have the Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) seal. This means there has been at least one scientific study of the product that proves it works. Many products are ineffective and a waste of your money.

Listed below are products that are VOHC approved.

Canine Products

- Prescription Diet Canine T/D: Original Bites and Small Bites
- Science Diet Oral Care for Dogs (half as effective as T/D)
- Iams Chunk Dental Defense Diet for Dogs and some of Iams prescription diets as well
- Eukanuba Adult Maintenance Diet for Dogs
- Purina DH Canine formula: Original Bites and Small Bites
- Purina Busy HeartyHide Chew Treats
- Purina Dental Chewz Dog Treat
- Tartar Shield Soft Rawhide Chews for Dogs
- Greenies – all sizes
- HealthiDent, Bright Bites, and Checkups Chews for Dogs
- Healthy Mouth
- Virbac CET VeggieDent Chews for Dogs – all sizes
- Milk-Bone Brushing Chews for Dogs
- VetIQ Minties Medium Dog Dental Treat
- Dog::Essential Healthy Mouth – all products
- PetSmile by SuperSmile Toothpaste
- SANOS Dental Sealant
- ADA-compliant soft-bristle, flat head toothbrush
- DentiQ Periodontal Gel



Feline Products

- Prescription Diet Feline T/D
- Science Diet Oral Care for Cats (half as effective as T/D)
- Purina DH Feline formula
- Cat::Essential Healthy Mouth – all products
- Greenies – all products
- Healthy Mouth

These are links to our YouTube video on home care products. This video includes a demonstration on tooth brushing for a cat.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQb8C9HKQUU>

This is a link to a video on how to brush your dog's teeth:
<https://us.virbac.com/home/our-products/pagecontent/product-selector/cet-enzymatic-toothpaste-dog-cat.html#video>

