

Dog Dental Care at Home Saves Money

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Another great way to save yourself some money on pet care this year is to be vigilant about your pet's at-home dental care. Your efforts can help you avoid costly veterinary bills, since dental problems due to lack of care rank among the top reasons for veterinary visits. Regular at-home dental care, along with your regular professional visits, can help reduce the risk of dental disease and save you the cost of treatment.

Since February is Pet Dental Health Month, we'd love to tell you about the kinds of [dental care](#) you can - and should - perform at home. We'll also recommend the products that will help you do it.

In no way does an at-home dental care routine replace the need for veterinary dental exams and cleanings, but it ensures healthier teeth between these visits. We recommend a 3-fold approach to at-home dental care:

1. Pet Tooth Brushing
2. Wiping Teeth with a Plaque-Killing Solution
3. Controlling Plaque with [Dog Dental Treats](#) and [Dental & Chew Toys](#)

Tooth brushing and oral care are easy to do at home. You need a few basic supplies, a little time to train your dog to accept tooth brushing, and plenty of patience, praise, and rewards.



Brush Your Dog's Teeth at Home

At-home brushing is the most important step in your at-home pet dental care. Begin brushing with our 4-step training process, below. You will need [dog toothpaste](#) that has a flavor appealing to your dog. Do not use human toothpaste, as it can upset your pet's stomach. You'll also need a [dog toothbrush](#) and small [treat rewards](#).

Step One

Start training by placing a little dog toothpaste on your finger and let your dog lick the paste from your hand. Do this step several days in a row, and follow it with a treat reward and praise.

Step Two

Place a little of the paste on your pet's large canine teeth in front. This gets your dog used to having something placed against his teeth and gums. Repeat this step for several days, and follow it with a reward and praise.

Step Three

Introduce the toothbrush you will use for regular brushing. Place some dog toothpaste on it and allow your pet to lick it from the brush. It will get your pet used to the texture - and of having the brush near his teeth and gums. Praise and reward your dog, and repeat this step for several days.

Step Four

In this final phase, you will actually brush your dog's teeth. Gently hold back your pet's lips and hold the brush at a 45 degree angle to the gumline. Brush the outside of each tooth, moving the brush gently back and forth. Always follow brushing sessions with a treat. Brush just a few teeth the first time, and gradually lengthen the session each time until you're brushing all the teeth.

In-Between Brushings

In between brushing, wipe your pet's teeth clean with a [dental cleansing pad](#) with chlorhexidine to kill bacteria on the gumline. Many owners also add a [dental solution](#) to their dog's water bowl for breath freshening.

Dental Benefits at Playtime

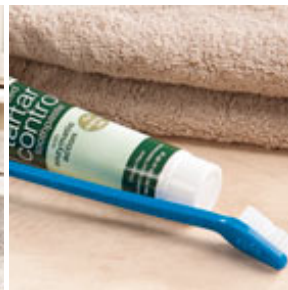
Even your dog's playtime can promote dental health, if you choose [dog toys and treats](#) specially made with textures that offer teeth-cleaning benefits. These dental toys and treats help scrape teeth clean as your pet chews. Play is important to your pet's mental and physical health, and when your pet can get dental benefits from the play sessions, all the better.

To get started, you simply need a few basic dental supplies. Keep them together in a bin or bucket, so they are all together when you need them. The following are some of our customer's favorites for pet teeth cleaning.

Recommended Dental Care Products



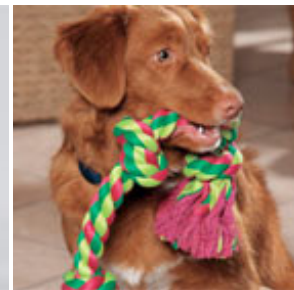
Drs. Foster & Smith
Dental Scrubbies®
Treats for Dogs



Drs. Foster & Smith
ToothCare
Dental Kit



Drs. Foster & Smith
Dental
Cleanser & Dental
Sponges



Flossy Chews Rope
Dog Bones



Finger
Toothbrushes



Dental Fresh
Liquids



Drs. Foster & Smith
Dental Care System



Nylabone Pro
Action Dental Chew