Dental Care at Home

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

In-Home Dental Care is Critical to Your Pet In-Home Dental Care is Critical to Your Pet
As veterinarians, we've seen first hand that the single best thing you can do to help prevent periodontal disease in your pet is to provide regular in-home care. The pets we examined who received regular in-home oral care rarely developed periodontal disease.

Even if you have only minutes each day, you have many options to help you establish an oral-care routine with your pet. This limited investment of your time and money is much less expensive than the cost of treating dental problems that result from neglect. And, assisting in your pet's dental care is a great way for you to spend one-on-one time with your dog.

Today's prevention options
We recommend a two-prong approach to your pet's dental care. First, we suggest you brush your pet's teeth daily to decrease plaque-forming bacteria. Second, we recommend that you offer your pet a dental treat or toy on a regular basis. Dental treats and toys help scrape off existing plaque, massage gums, and satisfies his urge to chew. In addition, there are plenty of ways to help freshen your pet's breath, whether he has an occasional bout with bad breath, or his problem is chronic.

Brushing/Mouth Care
Veterinarians recommend pets receive daily tooth-brushing as a necessary, proactive approach to their dental care. Most dogs will grow to enjoy the extra attention, but the key to a successful dental care program is to start slowly and learn the correct way to perform good oral care.

Special tools offer many choices to make the job easier and more convenient for you. Special dog toothbrushes, such as the EZ Dog Triple Toothbrush or the Drs. Foster & Smith Toothbrushes, ensure you have access to even the hard-to-reach back teeth. Dog-formulated toothpastes aid in removal of plaque and bacteria, while freshening breath. Oral solutions, such as Dental Cleanser Solution, are easy to apply with a soft sponge, and they require no rinsing. When you're short on time, a simple once-over with a ready-to-use, convenient Dental Clens Pad reduces plaque buildup and freshens breath. For stubborn plaque above the gumline, you can even use a veterinary-quality tooth scaler to scrape off plaque and bacteria-harboring calculus. However, we still recommend professional cleanings by a veterinarian, who can better do the job of cleaning below the gumline.

Treats/Toys/Bones
Chewing comes naturally for dogs, which gives you a unique opportunity to provide that second step in your pet's dental care. Dental toys and treats can effortlessly assist in his dental care, and your dog does all the work. Plus, he thinks he's getting a treat every time you give him one, making them a delicious way to scrape away plaque and tartar, and freshen breath, all while satisfying his chewing needs. Dental toys are reusable, and depending upon on their fabrication, provide various benefits. Harder, textured toys, such as the Pro Action Dental Chew, helps fight plaque buildup and massages your dog's gums. It is made to withstand virtually any impact without cracking and splintering, so every time your dog chews it, he receives the same dental benefits. Flossy Chews Rope Dog Boness are intended to help clean in-between your dog's teeth, much like floss. A delicious treat biscuit, such as the Drs. Foster & Smith Dental Mint Biscuits, satisfies your pet's treat cravings while helping scrape plaque. They also contain activated charcoal to absorb oral odors, making his breath fresher.

Giving your dog a treat after a brushing session will make your pet look forward to your next session.

Breath Fresheners
Sometimes, you simply need a quick solution for the common problem of "doggy breath." In addition to your pet's daily brushings, you may find it necessary to use a breath-freshener, as well. Any of our chlorhexidine solutions will help eliminate odor-causing bacteria, the culprit in most cases of bad breath. Natural mint Fresh Breath Tablets help to neutralize digestive odors that contribute to bad breath. Natural blends, such as Pet Kiss, help sweeten your pet's breath with a blend of parsley and sunflower seed oil.

Also, several of our treats and bones are infused with mint to make them excellent short-term breath fresheners.

Related articles:
Give Your Dog the Home Dental Care it Needs

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*