

Dental Care at Home

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



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 her urge to chew. In addition, there are plenty of ways to help freshen your pet's breath, whether she has an occasional bout with bad breath, or her 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 ToothCare Dental Kit](#), 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 [Drs. Foster & Smith Dental Cleanser](#), 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 [Drs. Foster & Smith 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, she thinks she's getting a treat every time you give her one, making them a delicious way to scrape away plaque and tartar, and freshen breath, all while satisfying her chewing needs. Dental toys are reusable, and depending upon their fabrication, provide various benefits. Harder, textured toys, such as the [Nylabone 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, she receives the same dental benefits. [Flossy Chews Rope Dog Bones](#) are intended to help clean in between your dog's teeth, much like floss. A delicious treat biscuit, such as the [Drs. Foster & Smith Premium Natural 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 [Drs. Foster & Smith 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.