

Dental care for your pet at home



NORTH CROYDON

VETERINARY CLINIC



ABOUT DENTAL CARE AND BRUSHING YOUR PET'S TEETH

80% of dogs and 70% of cats over 3 years old have some form of periodontal (dental) disease. Dental disease causes bad breath (halitosis) and pain, it is also a source of infection and can make your pet seriously ill.

Dental disease is preventable in the vast majority of cases and in most cases, easy to achieve at home. There are many different methods to keep your pet's "pearly white" teeth and these should be started while they are puppies and kittens.

For adult cats and dogs with existing dental disease, a dental treatment with a scale and polish under general anaesthetic is often necessary to get their mouth back into top condition. This will allow us to start prevention with a clean mouth which needs to be continued at home to hopefully prevent, or slow down dental disease developing again in the future.

1. Appropriate Food

There is scientific research supporting the use of food as an easy means of helping keep your pet's teeth clean. Royal Canin, Hills or Delicate Care Dental biscuit's unique size, shape and texture produce a mechanical brushing effect on teeth, helping to remove plaque and tartar when chewed. It also helps to reduce tartar through the inclusion of a specific nutrient that effectively reduces plaque deposits.

3. MAXI/GUARD Wipes & Gel

MAXI/GUARD Oral Wipes are both an effective pet oral product and applicator all in one. Cleansing the oral cavity of pets is much faster and easier since the wipes are infused with a unique zinc formulation. This taste free compound neutralizes offensive mouth odours, helps reduce the deposition of plaque and

aids in gingival inflammation. The wipes are textured to assist in the mechanical removal of plaque, but not so rough to cause damage to the gum tissue.

MAXI/GUARD Oral Cleansing Gel offers a natural zinc and vitamin c formula to effectively clean teeth and freshen breath with or without brushing. The product is natural, safe for daily use, inexpensive, taste free and provides good pet acceptance. Works with or without brushing.

3. Bones and Chews

Products such as Greenies, Whimzees and Dentabones encourage your pets to chew, which helps rub plaque off, and also spread protective saliva around teeth.

Not every dog or cat can have bones and there are some individuals that have medical conditions or gut sensitivities that prohibit their use within the diet. Bones also create a risk of dental fractures and choking or ingestion hazards. So, we recommend going for the dental chews available at your local pet store.

Please speak with your veterinary healthcare team if you are wanting to discuss your pet's individual needs.

4. Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Plaque will start to accumulate 12 hours after a scale and polish or brushing, therefore it is no surprise that cats and dogs benefit from having their teeth brushed regularly. Brushing is the 'gold standard' method of keeping your pet's teeth clean. We brush our teeth multiple times a day - your pet's teeth should be brushed daily too.

There are many dental toothbrush varieties on the market, along with different designs and dental pastes. Many pet dental kits come with a microfibre finger cloth with which to start, toothpaste and a double-headed toothbrush, specifically designed for your pet's mouth. Finger brushes can also be used. It is important to note that cats and dogs cannot use fluoride (human) toothpaste and a specific pet dental paste needs to be selected.

Our pets need to be trained to tolerate having their teeth brushed from a young age. Starting as a puppy or kitten is ideal, and gradually developing a system is important.

Here are some steps to help you brush your pet's teeth:

Introduce your pet to teeth brushing

Cats and small dogs may feel more comfortable if they can sit on their owner's lap while having their teeth brushed.

- Begin slowly, initial sessions should be brief, around 30 secs to a minute with lots of rewards.
- Get your pet used to the toothbrush by dipping it in tuna juice, chicken or beef stock or just use water.
- Next try offering the toothbrush with the pet toothpaste, without brushing. Allow your pet to taste the paste.
- When your pet is comfortable with the brush try brushing one or two strokes on a few teeth. Slowly increase the amount of brushing as your pet becomes more comfortable.
- Start at the front of the mouth. Pets are often more accepting of this.

Using a toothbrush

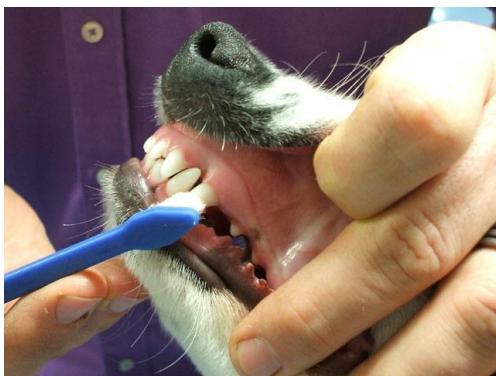
The toothbrush bristles should be placed at the gum margin where the teeth and gums meet at a 45-degree angle. The movement should be in an oval pattern. Be sure to gently force the bristle ends into the area around the base of the tooth as well as into the space between the teeth.





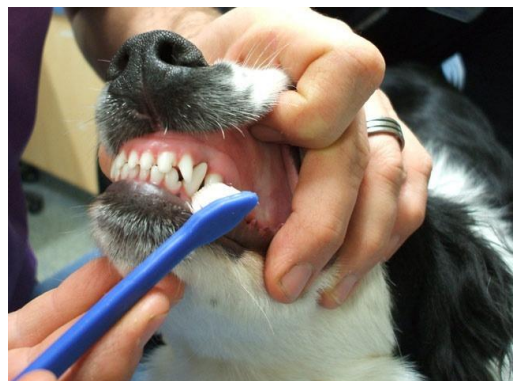
Place pet dental toothpaste on the brush.

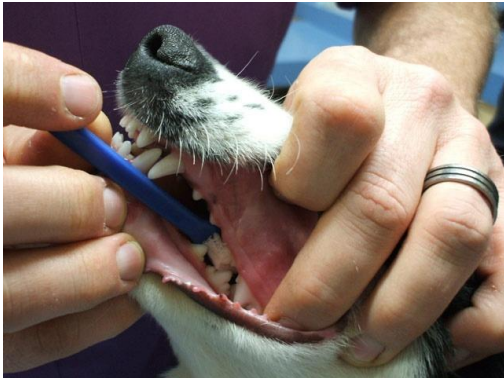
Using your fingers gently pull the gums away. Place the toothbrush on the teeth at a 45-degree angle and brush.



Pay attention to the canines.

Also the gaps between all teeth. And make sure you brush all the way to the back of the mouth.





Also work inside the mouth, cleaning the back of the teeth.

Using a finger brush

Place the finger brush on your index finger and apply pet dental toothpaste. Start at the front of the mouth, using an oval movement brush over the front teeth and gum.



Brush to the back of the mouth



Also, right alongside of the mouth

Moving back and forth



Veterinary dental treatments

In the majority of pet's lives, there comes a time when their teeth may require veterinary treatment over and above their regular examinations. A dental treatment involves a general anaesthetic and a full dental examination, including charting and scaling, both ultrasonically and by hand, and then finishing with a polish. A very similar procedure used by your own dentist. For more information specific to your pet, we encourage you to make an appointment with one of our Vets or trained Veterinary Nurses for a dental check.