

DENTAL HOME CARE INFORMATION



The Grove
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

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INTRODUCTION:

Dental care for your pet is a team approach with you as a vital player. Our job is to provide an accurate diagnosis and effective treatment for the diseases of the mouth. Your job is to provide consistent and effective home care. In as little as three hours after a professional cleaning, bacterial plaque is present on the teeth. This slimy substance can easily be removed with a toothbrush.

Once the plaque is removed, it prevents the inflammatory response known as gingivitis, which is the precursor to periodontal disease. Periodontal disease causes pain and infection, which has been tied to diseases of the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys. Think of your pet's teeth much like your own in regard to the care you provide and the benefits of these methods. The following is a concise breakdown of available home care methods.

TOOTH BRUSHING:

- Most effective and least expensive home care method
- Twice daily is ideal, but even once daily is beneficial
- Most pets can be trained to accept brushing, even if it is not started until they are adults. Remain calm and gradually train them.
- Start slow. Pet in a corner. Rub gums with moist finger. Talk gently and encourage. Give treat. Add finger brush. Give reward. When ready move on to a soft bristled tooth brush. Move to electric brush with time.
- Visit <http://www.felinevideos.vet.cornell.edu/pet-owners/cat-teeth/entire-video> for an instructional video for cats.

ORAL RINSES:

- Have an antiseptic action against bacteria
- Moderately effective compared to brushing
- Can be combined with brushing
- Applied once daily after feeding

DENTAL DIETS (HILL'S PRESCRIPTION DIET T/D):

- Most convenient
- Specially designed food nugget reduces plaque as pet chews

DENTAL FRIENDLY CHEWS

- Convenient for owner and entertaining for pet
- Need to be hard enough to help remove plaque, but not hard enough to damage the teeth
 - should be able to be indented with your thumbnail
 - should be able to be bent at a 90° angle
 - basic rule of thumb- if you would not want to be hit in the kneecap with it, it's too hard!
- We recommend CET Chews and Greenies.

ORAVET PLAQUE PREVENTION GEL

- Sealing gel reduces plaque and tartar formation by creating an invisible barrier that helps prevent bacteria from attaching to your pet's teeth.
- Requires professionally applied sealant at time of dental cleaning before beginning.
- Weekly applications beginning two weeks after dental cleaning and foundation sealing (foundation sealing can be done at time of spay/neutering).
- Compatible with all other home dental hygiene techniques.
- Demonstration video and additional information available at www.oravet.com.

One last resource is the Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) which is an independent corporation that puts products to the test. If they pass the testing for effectiveness, they receive their approval and stamp. For a list of dental products that meet their standards, visit www.VOHC.org.