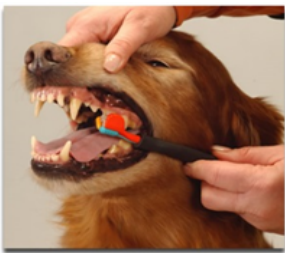




Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Dental disease can affect cats and dogs regardless of breed, age or gender. Symptoms include bad breath, inflammation or bleeding of the gums, difficulty chewing, excessive salivation, infection, tooth loss and pain. You can significantly decrease the risk of dental disease by instituting an oral homecare regimen. Brushing your pet's teeth daily is the most effective way to prevent dental disease.



We can provide you with a **tooth brush** (though a human soft bristle brush works well, or a finger cot with bristles) and **pet-approved toothpaste** that contains enzymes to help break down the tartar and bacteria that causes dental disease. Human toothpaste should never be used, as the fluoride can make your pet very nauseous when swallowed. You will only be brushing the outside surfaces of the teeth; the tongue provides an abrasive surface to help keep tartar levels lower on the inside surfaces.

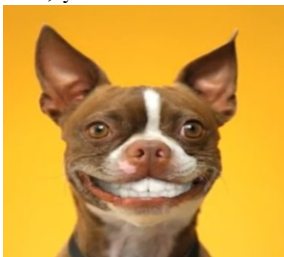
Consistency is key -- pick a time of the day that you can regularly brush the teeth and make this part of your daily pet care routine. Always remember to make tooth brushing a fun, positive experience with lots of attention and praise. Use the tips below to help desensitize your pet to toothbrushing:



Week 1: Begin by petting your pet's cheek, then allow your pet to lick a small amount of toothpaste off your finger. Do this once daily and don't forget to praise them afterwards.

Week 2: Place a small amount of toothpaste on your finger and use it to "paint" along the outer surfaces of the teeth and gums. No scrubbing/brushing at this point, we are simply trying to get them used to you being in their mouth. Finish with plenty of praise.

Week 3: Time to start brushing! Use either a rubber finger brush or soft bristled toothbrush - whichever your pet prefers. You may only be able to brush for 10-15 seconds the first few times. Hopefully, over time, you will be able to work up to close to a minute or more of brushing.



Don't get frustrated, as your pet can read your emotions.

Keep things positive and it will get easier over time.



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