

## **The Importance Of Dental Care For Your Pet**

We all know that brushing and flossing is a must if we want to keep all our teeth in our old age. Of course we want to take good care of our teeth and mouths because we desire pearly white teeth that are aesthetically appealing. However, we realize the importance of dental hygiene; we need to take care of our teeth so we don't succumb to disease that could have been prevented by simply brushing and flossing multiple times each day.

So, what about our dogs? They have teeth too, and they need dental care just like us. Though they don't mind if their teeth aren't the perfect shade of white, they probably do care if their mouth is poorly taken care of and if they suffer later on in life as a result from lack of attention. Like humans, dogs can have plaque, cavities, gingivitis, and tartar. Though you can take your pet to the local groomer to get their teeth cleaned, you can do it at home. Here's how to take care of your pet's teeth easily and effectively.

The best way to prevent periodontal disease and inflammation is by daily brushing your dog's teeth. Of course, you will want to begin slowly and entice your dog with treats and praise to encourage him or her to allow you to brush their teeth. This takes time, and effort, but it is well worth it.

When you brush your dog's teeth, you will most likely want to use a finger toothbrush or a simple kid-sized toothbrush. These are gentle, yet they allow the tartar and plaque to loosen up on the teeth and be flushed out. Also, you will need to make sure you use special doggie toothpaste. You can either get this at your personal veterinary office or at your local pet supply store. When you apply the toothpaste to the toothbrush, be sure to get the paste deep into the brush; if it just sits on top it will quickly come off in your pet's mouth and be ineffective. Be sure to brush your dog's teeth at a 45-degree angle, because this helps ensure that every tooth gets properly cleaned, and this makes it more comfortable for you as well.

Other ways that you can help your pet remain in good oral health is to feed them dry food instead of wet food. The crunchy chow works to gently scrub teeth as the food is chewed. Also, there are many, many special treat products available that claim to help clean teeth; though these do help, they certainly are not as effective as actually brushing each day. Chew toys are another way to help keep up good dental health. Chew toys with rubber prongs or ones that are textured certainly help gently rub off plaque from the teeth and are good choices for your pet's oral health.

Just like humans, dental health is important to dogs. Dogs can suffer from periodontal disease, gingivitis, tartar and plaque. There are doggie toothbrushes, toothpaste, chew toys, food, and treats that help keep your pet's mouth happy and healthy. Help your dog, and keep their mouth and teeth squeaky clean!