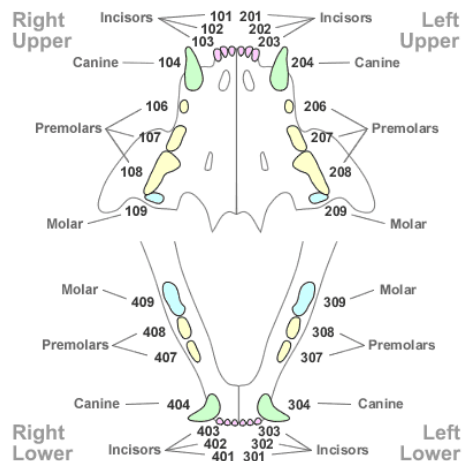


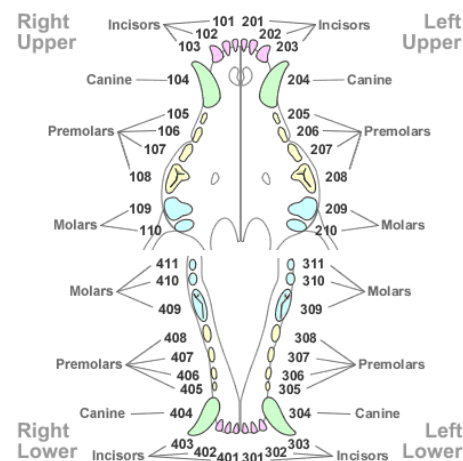
COMPANION ANIMAL DENTAL WELLNESS

Did You Know?

- ❖ Dogs have 42 adult teeth & cats have 30 adult teeth
- ❖ The majority (85%) of pets over the age of 3 suffer from some degree of dental disease.



Cat



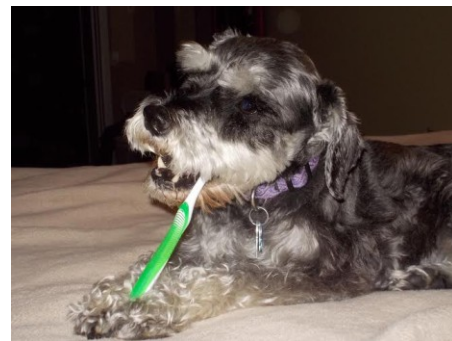
Dog

Why is Good Oral Hygiene Important for My Pet?

You may have noticed an odor that lingers after a friendly nuzzle from your pet. One of the earliest signs of dental disease is bad breath, which is commonly due to periodontal disease. Gingivitis and periodontal disease (inflammation and infection of the gums) form secondary to plaque accumulation which is the source of bacteria in the mouth. Just like people, our dogs and cats need to have professional dental cleanings and at home care to protect their teeth, gums and overall health. Dental disease can be very painful and ultimately lead to a noticeable decline in quality of life. Not only can dental disease lead to oral discomfort and tooth loss but also life threatening heart and kidney disease. Fortunately, with routine dental exams, preventative and maintenance care, these problems may be caught early, addressed quickly, or perhaps avoided all together.

Key Note: Good oral hygiene can add an average of 3 years of healthy life!

How Can I Help Prevent Dental Disease?



1. **Brush your pet's teeth.**

The best way to prevent dental disease is daily brushing of your pet's teeth. The toothpastes that are designed for dogs and cats contain enzymes that are designed to stay in contact with the teeth after application, dissolving away plaque and loose tartar before it turns hard and invades the gums. Brushing the teeth is important for mechanical removal of plaque but if your pet resists brushing, simply applying toothpaste to the teeth has benefits. For the best results, brush the teeth every day or two.

2. **Dental chews**

Dental chews are helpful in reducing the occurrence of dental disease. Chewing provides abrasion against the tooth's surface removing plaque and tartar. Some chews contain hexametaphosphate that prevent the mineralization of plaque into tartar. Greenies are one example of a dental chew that helps reduce plaque accumulation. There are a lot of chews on the market that claim to help dental disease but only those with the Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) seal come with the guarantee. Rope toys are another chew that can be utilized to help floss the teeth to prevent plaque and tartar buildup between surfaces.

3. **Kibble or Food**

The majority of pets should be fed hard kibble. Hard, larger sized kibble will reduce plaque build-up by mechanically removing plaque and tartar from the tooth. Research shows that a 50% increase in kibble size results in a 42% decrease in tartar accumulation in dogs. Special diets such as Hill's Science Diet T/D or Royal Canin Dental Diet are formulated to reduce the inflammation of the gums and aid in mechanically cleaning to reduce bacterial laden plaque. The fiber within these foods is orientated in a manner that predictably effects the way food breaks when chewed and disrupts the plaque before it develops into hard tartar. Some owners use the above diets as a complete diet, others use as treats after meals or at night time.

4. **Oral Rinses and Water Additives**

Oral rinses and water additives can provide antiseptic activity which prevents plaque accumulation. Look for the active ingredients like chlorhexidine and zinc gluconate for best results with oral rinses and water additives.

Key Note: It is important to recognize that dental chews and hard kibble should not take the place of daily brushing. Brushing your pet's teeth should be done in conjunction with other methods of dental care if at all possible.

What do I do if My Pet Has Dental Disease?

It is inevitable that every pet will at some point accumulate tartar and bacteria in their mouth. When needed we can provide a professional dental cleaning and polishing. Even the most obedient pets won't open wide for an extended period of time, so this procedure needs to be done under general anesthesia. This allows us to do a very thorough oral exam, dental cleaning, and polishing. Your pet will spend the day with us and go home late afternoon with nice smelling breath, healthy teeth and gums. And don't forget to brush when you get home!