

## Pet Dental Care

For most of us, caring for our teeth and gums has been part of our daily routine for as long as we can remember. Just like you, your pet needs regular dental care - professional care from your veterinarian and home care from you to keep plaque removed. Daily brushing and feeding special pet foods can help.

Ask your veterinarian about T/D Dental Care Diet, Oravet Sealant, Toothbrush starter kits and Dental Chews.

### CAUSES of Periodontal Disease

Plaque is a colorless film that contains large amounts of bacteria. If left unchecked, plaque builds up, creating infection, destroying gums and resulting in the loss of the tissues and bone that support the teeth. Preventive oral care can reduce the formation of plaque and help maintain proper oral health throughout your pet's life.

### SIGNS of Periodontal Disease

All pets are at risk for developing dental problems. Once your pet displays any of the warning signs below, serious periodontal disease may be present. Don't wait for these signs. Start a preventive program of veterinarian-supervised dental care today.

Bad Breath

Yellow-brown crust on teeth

Bleeding Gums

Lack of Appetite

Change of chewing habits

Tooth Loss

Subdued Behavior

Abnormal Drooling

Dropping Food

Not chewing food

### CONTRIBUTING Factors

1. Poor Oral Hygiene: Ignoring the condition of your pet's mouth can lead to periodontal disease, tooth loss, and other serious health problems over time, such as heart, liver and kidney failure.
2. Breed: Periodontal disease is more common in smaller breeds of dogs and certain breeds of cats.
3. Age: Periodontal disease is more common as pets grow older, though 70% of pets show signs of oral disease before age three.

### TIPS On Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Introduce a brushing program gradually and early; training may take several days or weeks.

Place your pet on a counter top facing away from you or stand over your dog if he is large. Apply a small dab of pet toothpaste on a moist toothbrush or finger brush (many pets seem more tolerant of finger brushes) . Gently brush your pet's teeth with your finger while rubbing the opposite ear with the opposite hand. Give your pet a nice, slow, shoulder and neck massage when you're done. Ask your veterinary staff to give you a demonstration. They would be delighted to!

Only attempt one side of the mouth per evening until your pet grows accustomed to the routine.

Never let a struggling pet go unless you feel he or she will bite. Only let your pet go when he or she is calm and quiet.

Make initial sessions brief and positive, gradually build up the time you brush your pet's teeth.

You only need to brush the outer surfaces of your pet's teeth.

Don't forget the molars located in the back of the mouth (under the "cheek")

Use PET toothpaste: Toothpaste designed for people contains ingredients that may upset your pet's stomach.