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Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Your veterinarian has most likely discussed with you the importance of brushing your pet's teeth on a regular basis. However, this is not always as easy as it sounds. As we know from our own busy lives, anything new should be started gradually and done on a consistent basis. The following steps can help make it easier to institute regular dental care into your pet's daily life.

It is very important to choose a particular time in the day when you know you will be home and will have time to brush your pet's teeth. Try to brush your pet's teeth consistently at (or around) this same time every day. If you are not able to do this everyday, once every other day will still be very helpful in slowing down the progression of tartar on your pet's teeth.



Another important aspect in getting your pet used to having their teeth brushed is to make it an enjoyable experience. Always speak to your pet in an upbeat and positive voice. After you are finished, shower your pet with praise and affection each and every time.

Step 1 / Week 1: During this first week you simply want your pet to get used to the taste of the toothpaste. Please use the toothpaste provided by your veterinarian. Do not try to brush your pet's teeth with human toothpaste as these contain fluorides which can be toxic to your pet. All you need to do is place a ¼ inch strip of toothpaste on your index finger and allow your pet to lick it off. If your pet does not appear to like the taste of the toothpaste provided, it comes in a variety of flavors including poultry, beef, and seafood. Repeat this daily for the first week.

Step 2 / Week 2: For the next week the goal is going to be to get your pet used to the brushing motion itself. Start by placing a ¼ - ½ inch strip of toothpaste on your index finger. Using a gentle, circular brushing motion, brush the outside surfaces of the teeth using your finger. This only needs to be done for 20 to 30 seconds in the beginning as they are getting used to it. Repeat this daily for the following week.



Step 3 / Week 3: Now that your pet has (hopefully) gotten used to the taste of the toothpaste and the brushing motion, the final step is to actually brush your pet's teeth with either the toothbrush or finger brush provided. You only need to brush the outside surfaces of the teeth using a gentle, circular brushing action. Try to work up to a minute or more of brushing at a time. Remember to stay consistent and make it a positive experience. Brushing allows you to slow down dental disease in your pet while bonding with them at the same time!