

Cleaning methods



Available methods

There are a number of different ways to care for your pet's teeth. Some are more effective than others. An overview is given below:

Good methods

Chewing bones, dental treats, breath tablets, food with dental-care ingredients (chlorophyll, propolis, etc.), dental toys (eg Kong, rubber toys).

Sherley's Rawhide Chews help keep dog's teeth clean by encouraging vigorous chewing.

Sherley's Dental and Fresh Breath Treats are crunchy, to physically remove plaque, contain chlorophyll paste to freshen breath, and have flouride to strengthen teeth.

Better methods

Tooth gel (can be used without brushing).

Best method

Toothpaste applied with a toothbrush designed especially for pets.



Sherley's Dental and Fresh Breath Treats



Sherley's provide a full range of dental care products for dogs and cats

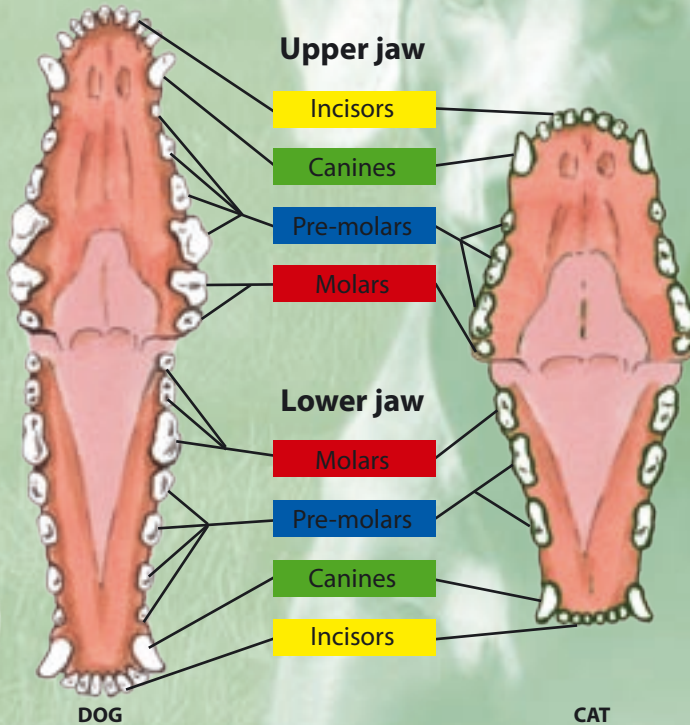
Sherley's Rawhide Chews

Dental care for cats and dogs



Dental care for dogs & cats

Dental hygiene for dogs and cats is just as important as it is for people. Just like us, pets suffer from bad breath and tooth decay. Regular care for your pet's teeth will prevent problems developing, and the need for expensive veterinary treatment. The main cause of dental problems is giving your pet food that is meant for human consumption. These treats often contain sugars that are harmful to pets' teeth. If you feed your pet on canned food, dental care is extra important. This kind of food doesn't clean the teeth during eating, as foods containing hard pieces do. Rather, it sticks to the teeth, and can cause problems.



Dogs' teeth
Just like wolves, dogs have the dentition of a carnivore; canines to catch their prey, and incisors to tear flesh (meat). Just like humans, pups are born without teeth. From the age of two weeks, the first milk teeth start to come through. At the age of three months, these are replaced by their adult teeth. The adult teeth push the milk teeth out, and some additional new teeth also start to come through.

Cats' teeth
Just like tigers, cats have the dentition of a carnivore: canines to hold the prey and tear the flesh (meat), incisors for scraping. Just like humans, kittens are born without milk teeth. They begin to appear when the kitten is about four weeks old. From eleven to thirty weeks old, kittens will lose their milk teeth and develop their permanent teeth.

Dental check-up

The dentition formulae below show which teeth are part of the milk-dentition and which are adult teeth.

3 1 3	3 1 3	UPPER JAW PUP	UPPER JAW ADULT DOG	2 4 1 3	3 1 4 2
3 1 3	3 1 3	LOWER JAW	LOWER JAW	3 4 1 3	3 1 4 3
2 1 3	3 1 3	UPPER JAW KITTEN	UPPER JAW ADULT CAT	1 3 1 3	3 1 3 1
2 1 3	3 1 2	LOWER JAW	LOWER JAW	1 2 1 3	3 1 2 1

Dental check-up

With the help of the drawings below, you can check your pet's teeth.



Healthy teeth

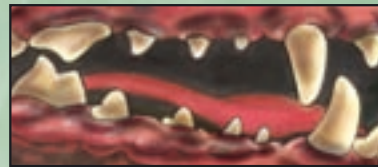
Healthy teeth don't have a layer of plaque, and look like this drawing. The gums should look healthy.



Plaque

If your pet's teeth look like this, it's clear that it is suffering from plaque. Plaque is a common problem. It consists of a soft layer of bacteria, calcium and phosphorous which accumulates from the saliva,

food and (hard) water. Plaque usually accumulates around the gums, but can also occur in other places, especially if these are difficult for the pet to clean with its tongue. Age and individual predisposition (ie some individuals are more likely than others to suffer from it) are also defining factors for plaque formation. You can remove plaque by careful, regular tooth brushing.



Tartar; the result of not removing plaque

If your pet's teeth look like this, we recommend that you contact your veterinary surgeon. Your pet is suffering with tartar. Tartar is the result of the calcification of plaque.

Everywhere that plaque forms is liable to develop into tartar. You can't brush tartar away; the veterinary surgeon will need to remove it. An average tartar treatment will cost £50 or more.

Other problems resulting from non-removal of plaque

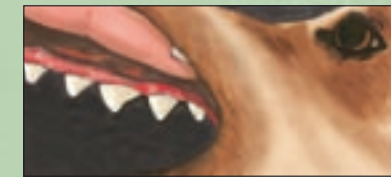
Plaque can also result in gingivitis (inflammation of the gums), periodontal disease (gum inflammation which leads to destruction of the tooth socket tissue and damage to the jaw bone), inflammation of cheek mucous membrane, and even tumors or growths in the mouth. The bacteria that cause these inflammations can also give problems in other parts of the body by entering the blood stream.

Getting used to dental care

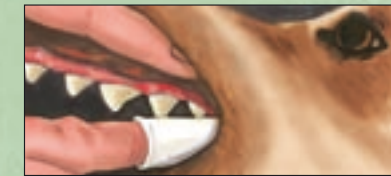
That should give you enough reasons to take care of your pet's teeth!! There are different ways and various products to help you take good care of your pet's teeth. Here is a summary:

If brushing is the chosen method of care, the paste must be specially designed for pets, as human toothpastes contain foaming agents which can cause intestinal problems. It takes a while, and some patience, for your pet to get used to regular dental care. Below is a step-by-step explanation of how to accustom your dog to having his teeth brushed. Be patient and develop a regular routine. If your dog doesn't like it, stop for a while; dental care must not be interpreted as a punishment. After approximately two weeks of gentle encouragement, your pet should have become accustomed to daily dental care.

Step-by-step guide to brushing your pet's teeth:

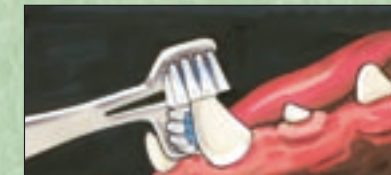


1) Pull up the top lip.



2) Let your pet taste the toothpaste (this will be a pleasant experience because the paste has an agreeable taste).

3) Get him used to having something in his mouth. Rub a finger over the outer surface of his teeth. Leave the canines until last, as these are the closest to his nose, and if he objects to you touching any of his teeth, it will be these.



4) Once he is used to having your finger moving over his teeth, try a finger-toothbrush or double-headed toothbrush. Try opening his mouth and gently brushing both the lower and upper teeth, including the inside surfaces (this is easiest with a double-headed toothbrush).

5) Preferably, brush the teeth daily, but at least twice a week.