

Home Dental Care

From the time that puppies & kittens get their adult teeth (4-6 months old) they are beginning to develop plaque. Plaque is a colorless film comprised of bacteria, protein, sugar, white blood cells, minerals, & water. Over time plaque accumulates on and around the teeth which leads to inflammation of the gums (gingivitis). Plaque also mixes with food and saliva to form a hard deposit on the teeth called tartar. This combination of plaque, tartar and gingivitis is referred to as periodontal disease.

Home dental care tools are all directed at removing plaque & the building blocks that form plaque. A home dental care plan for your pet could include all or some of the tools listed below.

1. Brushing the teeth

- Brushing the teeth with a pet-safe toothpaste and toothbrush is the best way to control plaque, tartar, and periodontal disease from forming. To get the most benefit, the teeth need to be brushed at least every other day but your pet's specific needs may require daily brushing. Consult with your veterinarian to determine the appropriate frequency of brushing.

2. Foods

- These are balanced/nutritional diets that can actually help your pet's teeth stay cleaner just by eating (chewing) the diet. For those pets that swallow their food whole, the kibbles of these foods are larger than other types of food, which encourages them to chew. Also, the internal texture of the food kibbles cleans the teeth as they chew the dental food.

- a. Science Diet T/D
- b. Royal Canin DD

3. Oravet

- This product is applied once weekly and provides a waxy coating on the teeth that can slow down the development of plaque, tartar, and periodontal disease.

4. Dental treats/chews

- Treats like the Greenies or CET dental chews can help slow the development of tartar and are significantly better than "Milkbones." Both help through increased chewing action using the teeth towards the rear of the mouth. The CET dental chews are also designed to decrease the bacteria in the mouth that contribute to the formation of plaque, tartar, and periodontal disease.

5. Rinses/water additives

- Water additives like the CET Aquadent can help slow the development of tartar and periodontal disease. CET also makes a mouth rinse that helps to wash away food and debris that contributes to tartar development. Both of these products decrease the bacteria in the mouth that contribute to the formation of plaque, tartar, and periodontal disease.