



*Good teeth
No plaque or tartar formation
and no gingivitis*



*Moderate teeth
Some plaque formation,
staining and tartar build up.
No gum disease.*



*Poor teeth.
Lots of tartar build up, gum
recession and inflammation*



*Teeth After Treatment.
Noticeable gum recession is
due to tartar accumulation
prior to dental treatment.*

Dental disease affects more than 85% of pets over the age of 3 years. Early detection of dental disease is vital. If left untreated dental disease can lead to serious problems and affect other body organs such as the heart and kidneys (bacteria get picked up in the blood stream and are taken off in the circulation to these areas). This, combined with the fact there is no longer any discomfort, is why pets often feel so much better following proper dental treatment.

What is dental disease?

Plaque will rapidly accumulate on the teeth, often within a few hours of feeding. It comprises of a mixture of bacteria and other organic materials (food / cells etc). Although plaque tends to be “invisible” if you look closely you will see it as a thin film over the tooth.

The plaque then invades the sub-gingival space – this is the area between the tooth and the gum. It also spreads down over the gum itself.

The activity of bacteria in the plaque and the production of toxins from these bacteria start to affect the surrounding gums. They become inflamed, there is an increase in circulation to the area and swelling and pain will be present. These are all signs of gingivitis.

Minerals in the saliva then combine with the plaque to form a hard, chalky type deposit know as tartar. This you can see. Tartar tends to form and accumulate fastest in areas next to salivary ducts i.e. the outside of the molar teeth and the insides of the incisor teeth. Tartar has a rough surface and presents a larger area for more plaque to form on, this becomes mineralised and a vicious cycle begins.

Inflammation of the tissues around the teeth becomes severe and then extends down into the periodontal space (around the roots). This affects the ligament holding the tooth in place in its socket and inflammation extends to this area. The tooth starts to become loose. Pressure on the gums results in bleeding, sometimes pus is seen around the tooth and the mouth becomes increasingly uncomfortable.

These symptoms continue until the tooth root itself becomes infected, along with the surrounding tissue and the tooth has to be removed.

The most common signs of dental disease include:

- Persistent bad breath
- Pawing at the mouth
- Drooling
- Difficulty in chewing or eating
- Irritability or depression.

Even if your pet is showing none of the above symptoms, good oral health is critical for overall health. A regular dental routine is a simple way to enhance your pet’s health. We will be happy to perform regular dental checks on your pet and advise you on a suitable dental routine, tailored to suit your pet’s own individual needs. Below is a series of steps that you can do in order to help your pets oral hygiene from dental treats and chews to hygiene gels and tooth brushing ~ the gold standard in dental care!

Dental Disease in Dogs and Cats

Dental treats and Chews

Treats to encourage chewing are an easy way to help dental health. These can include chews, rusks and rubber or nylon toys. "Dental diet" biscuits are formulated to help keep your pets teeth clean as he or she chews them. CET™ chews (Clean Every Tooth) from Virbac Animal Health are a combination of a coarse texture to help clean the teeth whilst chewing and an enzyme which inhibits the growth of plaque forming bacteria.

These products help with the mechanical abrasion and increase saliva production, which helps slow down oral bacteria.



Even the most difficult of pets will generally allow at least one of the above products to be used.

Hygiene Gels

The daily use of an oral hygiene gel such as *Logic Oral Hygiene Gel* can help as this product contains anti plaque agents. You simply smear it onto your pets teeth (or better still brush it on) and it gets to work in the mouth by helping to prevent the formation of plaque.



Tooth brushing

Brushing your pets' teeth is by far the best method for keeping teeth clean.

There are many different brushes and tooth pastes available.

Use a finger brush at first. Change to a tooth brush when your pet is happy with this.

Brush with a gentle circular action.

Make sure your pet is comfortable and treat teeth cleaning as a game or play time.

Start with just a few front teeth and increase the number cleaned each time.

Concentrate, initially, where the teeth meet the gums and on the outsides of the teeth.

Later, try and brush the inner surface of the teeth.

Push the toothpaste into the bristles of the brush, if you just put it on the surface your pet will devour it!

Try and brush your pets teeth every day.

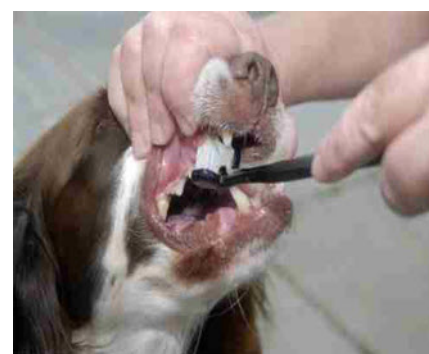
Always reward your pet afterwards.

Do not use human tooth paste as it contains fluoride and foaming agents which should not be swallowed.



A finger brush can be used initially to get your pet used to having an object in his mouth and the sensation of brushing.

Once he is used to this you can progress to using a tooth brush



If you have any questions or concerns.
If you would like a demonstration on tooth brushing.
If there is anything you are unsure about.

Please contact the surgery 01491 574490