



MyPet Animal Services

Dental Homecare

Without regular care and attention, bacteria and plaque will quickly build-up on tooth surfaces in your dog's mouth. After a few weeks or months, minerals from your dog's diet and saliva will build on this plaque to form tartar, especially noticeable around the gums.

Once formed, this is difficult to remove and may require veterinary dental treatment.

Even with regular care, many dogs will accumulate plaque and tartar over time and may require dental treatment in the future. However, there are several things you can do to help minimise this issue.

Toothbrushing

Regular brushing of your dog's teeth is the single most important method of helping to prevent plaque and tartar from forming.

This should be performed at least every other day in order to be effective. Less frequent brushing will not be as effective; less than once a week is probably not worth doing. Brushing every day, at a convenient time (e.g. after evening meal), can be the easiest and most effective way to achieve a successful routine.

If successfully accomplished, daily brushing can dramatically reduce recurrence of tartar, as well as strengthening the bonds, respect and affection between owners and pets.

Top tips:

- Use a soft toothbrush to avoid injuring or hurting your dog's gums
- Best to use an antibacterial toothpaste (e.g. Logic or CET)
- Slowly and patiently introduce your dog to brushing - allow your dog to first sniff and taste the toothpaste before introducing a toothbrush
- When your dog is used to having their mouth and teeth touched, use a wet toothbrush with only a small amount of toothpaste at a time
- Gently brush only one or two teeth to start, gradually building until this becomes a regular part of your routine and you can brush all your dog's teeth
- Make sure to provide fresh drinking water for you dog after brushing

*Water additives or dental health solutions may also help to defend against the build-up of plaque and tartar, but these generally are not an adequate alternative to brushing.

Diet

Any type of cooked meat or fish, including tinned dog food, will leave a residue of protein on the tooth surfaces, accelerating the formation of plaque and tartar.

Using only complete dried dog foods may help to minimise this, however there is no evidence that standard dried foods will clean plaque from a dog's teeth.

Some specialised dried foods - e.g. Hill's t/d - can help to clean plaque from dogs' teeth. They can be given either as a dog's main food, or used as a treat alongside their ordinary dried food.

Chews and Bones

Some dog chews - e.g. Rask, Dentastix, Dentreats - have been shown to actively clean plaque from dogs' teeth during chewing. This is of course dependent on how much they are chewed, rather than being swallowed whole.

Although chewing bones may also help to clean your dog's teeth, they are also likely to damage or break teeth, or cause digestive upset when swallowed. Therefore, it is not recommended to feed bones to dogs.

*These dental care methods can help to manage the condition of your dog's teeth, and can aid in minimising the development of dental issues. However, it is still recommended that you regularly visit your veterinary clinic for regular dental check-ups, advice, and dental treatment.

Whilst we offer this vet-guided care sheet to help improve dogs' at-home dental care, MyPet Animal Services does not provide Veterinary advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you have any concerns about any aspect of your dog's health, we recommend that you consult your veterinarian.