

Patton Veterinary Hospital Wants to Help Keep Teeth Healthy and White!

Does your dog clear a room when he pants? Does your cat have more than just tuna breath? If so, your pet may have periodontal disease. As many as 80% of pets have some degree of dental disease by the time they are three years old. But it's more than just stinky breath. Dental disease can cause pain, infection and serious complications for your pet. What can you do to keep your pet's breath fresh and to prevent other health problems? Read on!

We all brush our own teeth every day and should visit the dentist twice a year. Why shouldn't we be doing the same for our pets? A happy, healthy mouth starts with home dental care and routine veterinary visits. Brushing is the best way to keep teeth white. We know that brushing your cat's or dog's teeth is not always easy, but if you start when they are young or work slowly with older pets, you can often teach them to accept a tooth brush. Remember to use special toothpaste designed for pets that does not contain fluoride. It comes in flavors like peanut butter and poultry which don't sound like tasty flavors to us, but are great for our furry friends! If you just can't bring yourself to brush, there are other options:

Chews—Greenies, Milk Bones, CET rawhide chews and other dental treats are one of the easiest ways to promote dental health. The texture of these products helps scrape tartar off the teeth and some have the antiseptic chlorhexidine in or on them to reduce bacteria in the mouth. Kong dental toys, rope toys and similar playthings can also help clean teeth. Always use caution with treats and toys making sure your dog or cat is not ingesting the toys or gulping down treats. Discontinue use if treats cause stomach upset.

Rinses—there are several mouthwash-type products on the market that are squirted in the mouth daily to reduce plaque

Water additives—super easy to use and well tolerated by most pets, these are anti-bacterial products that are mixed daily with your pet's drinking water to reduce plaque and bacteria in the mouth

There are also some gels, wipes and pads that may work for you and your pet.

Regardless of which product you use, look for the Veterinary Oral Health Council seal (VOHC). This means the item was approved by this organization that reviews dental products for pets and is similar to the American Dental Association.

Patton Veterinary Hospital is offering a free home dental care product with any dental cleaning to promote dental health month and to help you keep your pet's teeth shiny and white! We want to help keep those doggie and kitty kisses smelling sweet and to give your pet a healthy mouth yearlong!

