

At Home Dental Care for Pets

Periodontal (dental) disease in pets is the second most common disease that Dr. Owen diagnoses (check out our page on atopic dermatitis for the #1 most common). 80% of cats and dogs older than 2 years of age will have this disease. Pets with dental disease can have dental tartar, calculus (firm/thick tartar) and gingivitis. As the disease progresses, the gums and tooth roots can become infected causing oral pain, weight loss and sometimes allowing oral bacteria to enter the blood and affect various organs.

Often pets with periodontal disease require in clinic dental procedures to scale/polish the teeth, extract any severely affected teeth and return the oral cavity to a healthy state. Once the oral cavity has healed after a dental procedure and even more importantly, before periodontal disease progresses, at home dental care is extremely important.

Teeth Brushing

The gold standard in preventing periodontal disease in dogs and cats is teeth brushing. That's right, we should brush our dogs' and cats' teeth every day too! Its best to get pets in the habit of having their teeth brushed regularly at a young age, using positive reinforcement training and veterinary-approved dental hygiene products. *It is not safe to use human toothpastes and dental products for pets.* Most cats and many dogs will still not tolerate teeth brushing so Dr. Owen emphasizes the easier, cost effective options below.

Veterinary Prescription Dental Diets

The easiest of at home dental care options are using a prescription dental food. Several prescription diets are available but our most recommended is Hill's t/d diet. Its available for both dogs and cats. Your pet can be completely transitioned this diet. Another cost effective option is to add 3-5 kibbles of this diet to each meal and give as treats.

High Quality Dental Chews

Unfortunately, a large amount of dental chews for dogs and cats are not very effective. Please consult us before buying dental products for your pets. Since we recommend them so often, we carry our favorite brands at our clinic: CET dental chews for dogs and feline greenies for cats. We typically recommend giving your pet a dental chew every other day.

Oral Rinses

In some periodontal disease cases, an oral rinse with an antiseptic solution can help decrease the bacterial infection in your pets mouth. As with the other dental products, not all oral rinses are created equal. In general, products that are added to drinking water have little benefits. We recommend and carry clenazent oral rinse, which can safely be applied directly to your pet's gumline.