



The key to better health is right under their nose

By the age of three, 80% of pets are living with dental diseases. Maintaining oral health is important because gum disease can cause pain and stop your fur friend from living their best life.

We can help! Dental checks at Petfirst veterinary are free. Your Petfirst veterinarian will check your pet's teeth at a wellbeing visit or annual health check - or ask one of our friendly, expert nurses who can check out their teeth and give you tools, tips and advice on how to keep their smile sparkling at home.

Causes of Dental Disease

Plaque is at the root of most dental problems in pets. Plaque is a colourless film that contains large amounts of bacteria. Left untreated, it will harden into tartar that forms along the base of the tooth, near and below the gum line causing inflammation of the gums (gingivitis). As the inflammation progresses, it destroys gums and tissues that support the teeth, leading to pain, bone loss, and tooth loss.

Infection associated with dental disease can be responsible for bad breath, pain and reduced quality of life. Bacteria can also enter a pet's bloodstream affecting their overall health.

What to look out for at home

- Bad breath
- Bleeding or red gums
- Yellow brown crust around gum line (ask your veterinarian or nurse to show you how to check and what to look for)
- Dribbling saliva
- Subdued or changed behaviour
- Tooth loss
- Pawing at the mouth
- Change of eating habits, pain when eating or reluctance to eat



Prevention is better than cure

That's pretty scary! But, don't worry: Preventive oral care throughout your pet's life can keep them living their best life – for their whole life.

Dentals

Research has proven that 80% of all cats and dogs have some form of visible dental disease by the age of 2. Tartar build up is like cement on the teeth. The best way to avoid more serious dental disease is for your pet to have dental checks at least once a year. Like us, our fur friends benefit from a scale and polish and the vet or nurse will recommend this if needed.

At a scale and polish, your pet will be anaesthetised and a tube placed down the throat before an ultrasonic scaler is used to remove tartar. At the same time, we can have a much closer look and take further action if needed. Then, teeth are polished to help reduce tartar build up.

Prevention is the best way to reduce further dental work being required.

Brushing

Regularly brush your cat or dog's teeth using finger brushes, pet toothbrushes and pet toothpaste available from our Petfirst clinics.

Our expert veterinary nurses can show you what to do and share tips and tricks for making it easy. Get your pet used to having its teeth brushed using just a brush initially then progress to using pet toothpaste, initially brush the front teeth only and then slowly incorporate back ones as well brushing at a 45-degree angle. Never use human toothpaste on dogs.

Dental Diets

All premium dry nutrition sold at Petfirst Veterinary is specifically formulated to slow down the formation of plaque and tartar and to scrape tartar off your cat or dog's teeth.

Specific prescription diets are available to reduce the progression of dental disease. You will notice a difference in a few weeks. Prescription diets are nutritionally balanced providing all the nutrients your pet needs for staying healthy. These foods should be fed long term, either on their own or alongside your pet's regular food to maintain dental health.

Avoid feeding your pet table scraps and treats that encourage plaque formation.

Dental Treats, Chews and Toys

Your fur friend won't even know they're brushing their teeth with our range of dental toys, chews and treats for cats and dogs. These products help clean teeth both mechanically (scraping plaque off their teeth and massaging gums as they chew) and chemically (with compounds to neutralise bacteria).

Water Treatments

Preventative and prebiotic options are also available that you simply add to your fur friend's water. These help to prevent bacteria-laden tartar sticking to the teeth and/or neutralise bacteria in the mouth.

If you would like to get your fur friend's dental health assessed, or if you have more questions, pop into the clinic, ask at your next wellness visit or chat to us on WhatsApp or via text at 3489.

