



Preventative Dental Care for Your Dog

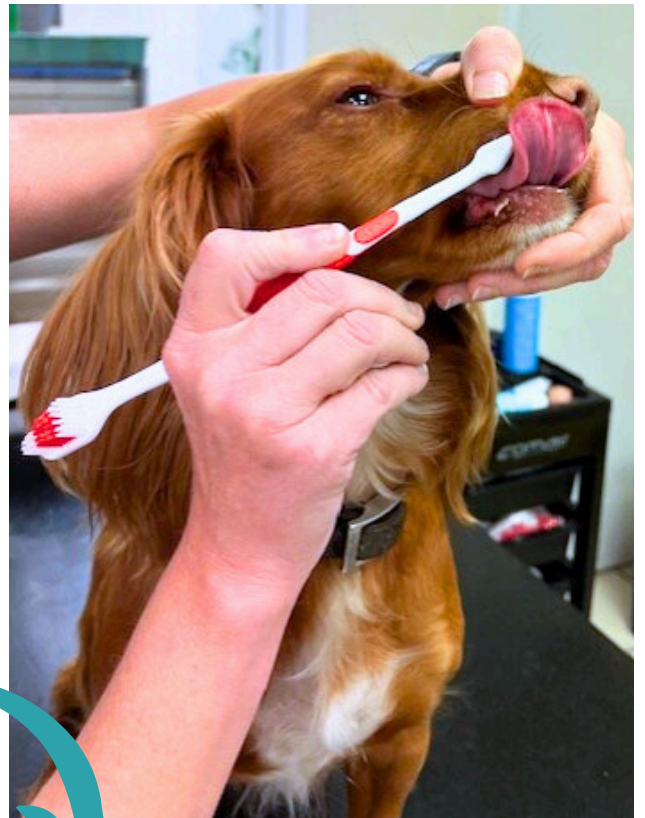
Just like us, dogs can suffer from tooth and gum problems, especially as they get older.

However, a good home care regime, combined with regular checkups with a vet or nurse, will help keep your dogs' mouth healthy and pain-free, whilst reducing the need for future professional dental cleaning and extractions, that must be performed under general anaesthesia.

Regular (at least twice weekly) tooth brushing is by far the most effective way of achieving this. This may sound daunting but with a little time and patience, most dogs will allow their teeth to be brushed. Whilst it is certainly easier if you start when they are young, the saying 'you can't teach an old dog new tricks' really does not apply in this case!

Take things slowly and get them used to having their teeth cleaned over a few weeks by following these simple steps:

-  **Let them taste their new dog-safe toothpaste** by licking it off your finger, give them lots of praise and treats, so brushing their teeth becomes a positive experience.
-  **Get them used to having their mouth touched.** You can do this by gently rubbing your finger, or a soft cloth along their gums.
-  **Gradually move** on to using a brush that fits over your finger. This will get your dog used to the feeling of their teeth being brushed.
-  **When your dog's comfortable** and ready, use an appropriate dog toothbrush. The longer handle will help you reach all of their teeth.
-  **If your dog shows signs of pain, their gums look sore or bleed when you are brushing, stop and speak to a vet for further advice**



Watch this video to see these tips in action
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cG4cbmMbbXk>

Although regular brushing has been shown to be the most effective way to keep your dog's mouth healthy, there are other things you can do to help, if it is not possible.

- Dental gels applied to the teeth and gums, such as Stomodine
- Toys or dental chews that are designed to clean dogs' teeth as they chew on them
- Supplements to put in the water, such as Aquadent
- Powder to put on the food, such as Plaque-off
- Food formulated specially to help clean teeth as it is chewed (Royal Canin Dental diet)
- Avoid feeding too many sugary treats
- Do not allow your dog to chew stones or bones – these can cause damage to teeth

