

# Dog Dental Healthcare

Caring for your dog's teeth is very important and owners must make sure their dog is receiving the proper care they need. This pamphlet gives you information on how to care for your dog's mouth and teeth, no matter how old they are.

## Young Dogs/Puppies:

If you have a dog, I'm sure you know that it can have foul breath at times. However, did you know that bad breath can be a sign of disease? When your dog is a puppy, make sure you get it checked out at the vet, as some cancerous oral tumors or even tooth abscess can cause bad breath. If you notice a change in your dog's breath, make sure to get it examined.

Some dog food is especially made to help remove plaque off of your dog's teeth. If your dog has issues with plaque, check online to try and find some of these foods and treats that can help them. For example, the Veterinary Oral Health Council has a full list of suggested diets for your pets: <https://vohc.org/>



The toys that your dogs chew on play an important role in developing their teeth. While your puppy is going through the stage of losing and growing new teeth, it will likely chew on many things and teethe often. Make sure that you have plenty of chew toys, as these types of toys both help them grow the new teeth coming in and with the pain of losing teeth. \*Make sure that you aren't getting very hard toys for your dog to chew on, because this can cause your dog to break their teeth. As a puppy, their teeth are softer and still developing.

You should also make sure that you are brushing your dog's teeth. Periodontal diseases are very commonly diagnosed in dogs. In fact, they are the most commonly diagnosed disease in pets. To avoid this, you want to try and decrease the plaque build-up on your dog's teeth. When there is too much plaque build-up, the gums can get inflamed and infected, causing discomfort in your dog's mouth. It is suggested that you brush your dog's teeth daily, as this is most effective. Never use human toothpaste, but there are toothpastes made for dogs that you should use, some recommendations are at [vetsbest.com/](https://vetsbest.com/). If your dog resists brushing, try to use treats. There are many treats made for dogs that help their teeth and breath. For example, Greenies Dental Treats are commonly used and can help improve your dog's breath, but you should closely watch your dog while they chew and still monitor their teeth for plaque.

Overall, the care of your puppy's teeth is very important, so make sure that you are taking the necessary actions to maintain healthy oral hygiene.

## Middle-aged Dogs:

When your dog is middle-aged, they can be more prone to disease and injury than when they were a puppy, including periodontal issues. But, their dental health care is similar to puppies, and you should continue good habits to promote healthy teeth, by offering chew toys (similar to those pictured below), brushing your dog's teeth, and discussing oral health at veterinarian checkups.



## Elderly Dogs:



It can be difficult to tell when your dog is a senior because it depends on the breed and its lifestyle. When you have a senior dog, it is very important to keep him/her active to give them the best opportunity to stay healthy. You should talk to your veterinarian and ask which aspects to look out for concerning their teeth based on the breed and their overall health. Because older dogs may have competing issues, you should keep an eye on their teeth. If you ever suspect that your dog may have any mouth-related disease or injury, which can be common as their teeth age, see a veterinarian right away to avoid chewing and digestive problems and/or weight loss (these are signs

you can look for that may be related to your dog's teeth). You should also consider food choices as they get older since they may require soft kibble if they have tooth loss or excessive dental wear and tear. But, you should do what you have been doing regularly, like providing dental treats and toys for chewing, brushing their teeth, and appropriate feeding. This will also help bad breath!

Some helpful websites are: [kenneltocouch.org/2020/06/dental-disease-in-senior-dogs-be-aware-of-the-signs/](https://kenneltocouch.org/2020/06/dental-disease-in-senior-dogs-be-aware-of-the-signs/) and [animalwellnessmagazine.com/the-ultimate-guide-to-dental-care-for-senior-dogs/](https://animalwellnessmagazine.com/the-ultimate-guide-to-dental-care-for-senior-dogs/)

## Don't Forget!

Caring for your dog's oral health is essential, but it doesn't have to be hard. Make sure you consider your dog's teeth when selecting toys, treats, and food, and, if you have questions, ask your vet. They can address any issues and help you select different tools and treats that will help your dog stay healthy and happy.