

## Buckeystown Veterinary Hospital – Dental Home Care

Now that your pet has a clean, happy mouth there are numerous options available to you to preserve dental health at home. Good dental care can help to prevent plaque and tartar buildup, minimize gingivitis, and extend the time period between veterinary dental cleanings. We are happy to help you find the combination of options below that is most effective for you and your pet:

- 1) *Oravet*: A special sealant called Oravet was applied to your pet's teeth and gums during its dental. This waxy material helps to retard tartar buildup and prevent bacteria from colonizing the gingival sulcus between the teeth and gums. Oravet remains effective for about 2 weeks. You can extend the benefit of this treatment with reapplication at home. By making an appointment two weeks after your pet's dental we can show you how to use the Oravet home care kit.
- 2) *CET Rinse*: Included with your dog's dental is a bottle of CET Rinse, an anti-plaque agent. Simply insert the straw into your dog's mouth along the outside of the cheek teeth and squeeze some of the solution along the gumline. Repeat on both sides once a day (bonus: it helps freshen breath!).
- 3) *Dental Diet*: Several different brands of therapeutic dental foods are available through veterinarians (we carry Hill's t/d and Purina DH). These foods (dry formula only) are designed to scrape tartar off teeth and control bad breath. For maximum benefit they should be fed as the sole diet.
- 4) *Dental Chews*: A plethora of "dental chews" are available at pet stores; these may have some beneficial anti-tartar effects. We offer and recommend CET HEXtra chews, available only through veterinarians. These treats combine the mechanical tartar scraping power of rawhide with the antibacterial and antiplaque properties of chlorhexadine for maximum dental benefits. These treats are available in different sizes for cats and all types of dogs.
- 5) *Toothbrushing*: Brushing your pet's teeth is the absolute best form of dental care you can provide! To be effective, brushing (with a toothpaste designed for animals) should be performed at least 3 times a week, ideally everyday. By introducing toothbrush and paste gradually at an early age, most animals can be trained to accept some form of the procedure. We are happy to show you how to begin this effective preventive care, and we stock numerous brushing products.
- 6) *Periodontitis Vaccine*: There is now a vaccine available to help protect dogs from periodontitis (infection of the oral tissues by *Porphyromonas* bacteria). While not a substitute for regular dental care, the vaccine can help lessen the severity of dental infections in susceptible breeds of dogs (small dogs, Greyhounds, etc.). Two vaccines are given 2-3 weeks apart, followed by an annual booster. The most common side effect is pain and swelling at the injection site.

We hope one or more (or all!) of the above strategies will work for you and your pet. Some of these measures take time and patience to implement, but your effort will be rewarded by a happy pet with a beautiful smile! Do not hesitate to contact one of veterinarians or technicians with any questions about dental care at (301) 698-9930.