

LOOKING AFTER YOUR PET'S TEETH

DOGS AND CATS

Dogs and cats have two sets of teeth:

- 1 Baby teeth (start to fall out around 5 months)
- 2 Adult teeth (usually all present by 7 months)

Sometimes teeth grow in the wrong position, which can be painful. Your vet can give advice about treatment options.

When your pet is teething, they may:

- Chew on different textures to ease discomfort. Keep valuable or dangerous items out of reach!
- They may also have smelly breath.



If this lasts longer than a month or your pet seems very uncomfortable, see your vet.

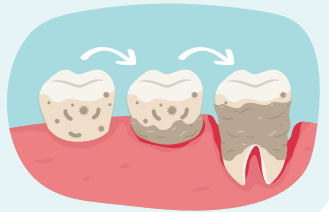


PROBLEMS CAN HAPPEN IN THE MOUTH

The mouth naturally contains lots of bacteria.

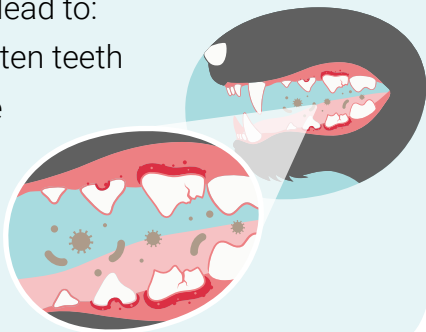
Over time:

- Bacteria form a sticky film called plaque
- Plaque can harden into tartar



Plaque and tartar damage teeth and gums and can lead to:

- Broken or rotten teeth
- Gum disease
- Pain
- Infection
- Abscesses
- Bad breath



Dental disease can make pets:

- Feel a lot of pain
- Become very sick
- Show very few obvious signs because pets often hide pain, so problems can be serious even if your pet seems normal.

There are also some specific diseases that affect the teeth and gums – like tooth resorption in cats. This is a genetic condition and causes painful holes in teeth and inflamed gums.



Your pet might have a serious dental condition **EVEN IF THEY ARE STILL EATING**. It is **important** to have a yearly vet check of your pet's health.

CARING FOR YOUR DOG OR CAT'S TEETH AND GUMS

You can reduce dental problems by:

1 Yearly vet checks

- Your vet can detect problems early with regular vet checks.



3 Tooth brushing (for dogs – cats don't cope with this)

- Teach your pet slowly and gently.
- Your vet can show you how.



2 Avoid hard chews

- If a treat or raw bone would hurt if you hit your knee with it, it can break your pet's teeth. Do not feed cooked bones or large raw hard bones. Avoid small, round bones too - these can get stuck in your pet's throat.



4 Act early

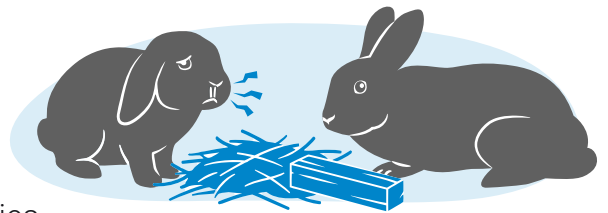
- See your vet if something looks wrong or your pet injures their mouth.



SMALL PETS NEED DENTAL CARE TOO

Rabbits and guinea pigs have continuously growing teeth. Their teeth must wear down every day. If they don't, teeth can:

- Become overgrown
- Cause pain and mouth injuries
- Grow in the wrong direction
- Make it hard or impossible to eat



PREVENTING DENTAL PROBLEMS IN SMALL PETS

1 Feed lots of hay

- This should be most of their diet
- It naturally wears teeth down



2 Limit pellets

- Pellets are soft and can lead to dental problems



3 Regular vet checks

- Dental disease can be hard to spot



Your vet can check your pet's teeth and give helpful advice.

SIGNS YOUR PET MAY HAVE A DENTAL PROBLEM

Watch for:

- Pawing at the face
- Drooling or wet chin
- Dropping food
- Avoiding hard food
- Eating less or on one side



- Bad breath
- Swelling under the eye
- Weight loss
- Teeth grinding (especially rabbits and guinea pigs)



If you notice these signs, see your vet. Looking after your pet's teeth and seeing your vet regularly helps keep your pet healthy and comfortable.