



## **BRUSHING YOUR PETS TEETH**

What would happen if you stopped brushing you own teeth? Even if you only ate hard food as most pets do, there still would be problems. You should be brushing your pet's teeth at least twice weekly or daily if you could manage it.

### **HOW TO BRUSH YOUR PETS TEETH**

- 1.) Pick an appropriate toothbrush. A child's toothbrush is usually too hard so it is recommended to pick a toothbrush that has a long handle with an angled head to better fit the mouth and extra soft bristles. Or another option would be a finger toothbrush that fits on the top of your finger.
- 2.) Select an appropriate toothpaste. The best toothpaste contains enzymes that help control plaque. Avoid toothpaste with baking soda, detergents, or salt which is sometimes found in human toothpastes. Rather than placing the paste on top of the brush try to place it between the bristles. This allows the paste to spend the most time next to the teeth.
- 3.) Attempt the teeth brushing. Approach your animal in a gentle matter. If you can start when the animal is young, it's quite easy, but even older pets will accept the process. Start slowly, you can use a washcloth or piece of gauze to wipe the teeth, front and back in the same manner you will eventually be using the toothbrush. Do this twice daily for about two weeks and your dog should be familiar with the approach. Then take the pet toothbrush, soak it in warm water and start brushing daily for several days. When you pet accepts this brushing, add the pet toothpaste. The toothbrush bristles should be placed at the gum margin where the teeth and gums meet at a 45 degree angle. The movement should be in an oval pattern. Be sure to gently force the bristle ends into the area around the base of the tooth as well as into the space between the teeth. Ten short back-and-forth motions should be completed, and then the brush should be moved to a new location. Cover three to four teeth at a time. Most attention should be given to the outside of the upper teeth.

Pet's home care should include daily (or at least every other day) brushing, using an enzymatic pet toothpaste. When you take an active role in the care of you pet's dental care it will help reduce dental disease, bad breath and potential life threatening heart and kidney disease.