

CLEANING YOUR CATS TEETH

Why we should clean our cat's teeth

Dental disease is the most common oral disease, it is affecting 80% of the animals that are over the age of 3 years. To help prevent this it is recommended to brush your cat's teeth daily. Cat toothpaste must be used NOT human toothpaste as it is not to be swallowed and contains fluoride which is toxic. Teeth brushing can be started at any age, it takes patience and perseverance.

Start off slowly



Introduce your cat to the toothpaste first. Let them lick it off your finger. Use enzymatic toothpaste as this will help destroy plaque.

How to hold



Get your cat used to their head being held for brushing their teeth. Place opposite brushing hand around their head and use your thumb and fore finger to lift their lip so you can introduce the brush.

What to use



Use a medium bristled toothbrush which is a suitable size for your cat's mouth. You can start off by using a finger brush or a cotton bud if this is easier and then follow onto using the toothbrush.

Brushing teeth

Once your cat is comfortable with their head being held and the feeling of the toothbrush, start to brush. Only brush a few teeth to start with and build up slowly to cleaning the whole mouth. Do a small amount daily to get your cat used to it. Its best to brush in circular motions.

When cleaning the upper jaw have the toothbrush pointing upwards and when brushing the lower jaw have the toothbrush pointing downwards, this is to make sure that we are getting right into the areas that plaque likes to sit.

Always do it in a positive way so your cat is less likely to get stressed. For example, clean their teeth and then play with their favourite toy, so they associate it with something fun. With time you cat should tolerate this well.

Book your free nurse dental health check for more information and go to <https://icatcare.org/advice/how-brush-your-cats-teeth> for a video on how to brush your cat's teeth.