



Protect your puppy's pearly whites

An article by dvm360 in association with Kathryn Primm, DVM, and modified for Evergreen Veterinary Hospital

28. That's the number of teeth in your puppy's mouth, and each of these are vitally important to your puppy's daily activities and overall health. As with your own teeth, neglected puppy teeth can collect plaque and tartar that can lead to periodontal disease and even tooth loss – a fact that becomes even more important when those 28 puppy teeth are replaced with 42 permanent adult teeth.

Brush up on your toothbrush options

You have lots of options when it comes to choosing a toothbrush for you puppy – from brushes that look like your own toothbrush to a soft, rubbery brush that fits over your finger. Choose a brush made specifically for dogs that can safely and comfortably fit in your puppy's mouth. Do not hesitate to ask the Evergreen Team to help pick the best brush for the job!

Do not use force

Teach your puppy that the toothbrush is super cool and that when it comes out, great things happen (like treats)! If you keep the toothbrush in a drawer or container, store other goodies there too so your puppy can learn that opening the drawer always means good things. Slowly introduce the brush into your puppy's mouth. If your puppy is still comfortable, move forward. If your puppy ever withdraws from your touch, go back to the last step. Never use force – it may teach your puppy to fear or dislike the toothbrush.

It is very unlikely that you will brush all twenty-eight teeth on the first try, and that is okay. Patiently move up to longer brushing periods and keep it positive with encouragement and rewards with improvement. The goal is to brush daily because the plaque will harden into tartar in as little as 36 hours. Brushing it off every 24 hours will make the most impact.

Pick a paste

You can also choose a pet toothpaste, but do not use ones meant for people! These products can help make the experience fun for you puppy because they come in different flavors, like chicken and peanut butter. Ask the Evergreen Team for a recommendation today!

Visit dvm360.com/dalmatiandental for a very cute demonstration of toothbrushing techniques and tips!