



## The Truth About Pet Toothpaste and Oral Hygiene

Fact: Your pet's oral hygiene is directly linked to his/her overall health and happiness. As a pet owner, it is our job to constantly make an effort in bettering our pet's overall oral health and hygiene. It is essential that our pet's teeth are brushed regularly. Brushing their teeth might not be their favorite activity you do together but it is definitely necessary for their health.

Before venturing out into the world of over-the-counter snake oils and brushless sprays, it is important to understand the need for certain things and what to look for before buying them. When you get a new toothbrush for your pet you will also need to look for new toothpaste, as well. So what do you need to look for in the right toothpaste for your loved one? First off, the most important thing to remember is that humans rinse and spit when we brush - our pets do not have that ability. The toothpaste has to be formulated to ingest. Human toothpaste can be highly toxic to pets!

What flavor does your pet like? Beef, chicken, mint, peanut butter, tuna, etc.? At the end of the day if your pet does not *love* the flavor of the toothpaste, then you will be forcing it upon them - thus creating a negative experience. Experiment with the flavors mentioned above so your brushing experience will be a positive one.

Some of the common ingredients present in dog and cat toothpastes are:

- enzymes - works in reducing bacteria
- silica – works to gently remove plaque and tartar
- emulsifiers - helps prevent plaque and tartar from sticking
- sorbitol - sweetener to make it pleasant to taste

Before choosing a product for your pet be aware of the ingredients, do not buy anything you are unsure or have questions about. *It is better to stay away from sweeteners and alcohols* - they do not help with plaque removal or inflammation. If possible, start with the smallest tube of paste. That way, if there is any negative response to the paste, then you have not invested a lot in something you will can't/won't use.

There are also natural alternatives to pet toothpaste, such as what we make here at The Funky Mutt Market and FloridaWild Veterinary Hospital. Our toothpaste is a coconut oil based toothpaste. We made sure in making our toothpaste that we stayed away from sugars and other unnecessary additive that have no active benefits.





### **Plaque, Tartar and Bio-film**

Halfway through your day, after coffee and breakfast you can already detect bio-film on your enamel surfaces. This film is invisible plaque that is accumulating - becoming tartar and calculus. The longer bio-film collects debris, etc. the more bacteria is invited - ultimately becoming inflammation/gingivitis.

Regardless of how well brushing is going at home, your pet still highly benefits from having their teeth professionally cleaned under anesthesia at least once a year. This begins at one year of age for smaller pets and two years of age for larger ones.

Abrasive chews and diets can help remove bio-film and regular plaque accumulation. However bones, hooves, antlers, etc. are all harder than the tooth itself. These products can cause painful fractures that need to be repaired or extracted (just like in humans).

Schedule a free dental evaluation and meet and greet with Kevin to go over any specific questions or concerns about toothpaste, home care or general dentistry concerns.