



Dental health in cats

It's important to monitor our pet's dental health. Your cat's mouth and teeth have been examined as part of a complete health check with one of SAFE's affiliated vets and you will have been informed if they have needed treatment whilst in our care.

Like humans most cats need ongoing dental health care throughout their lives and will usually need dental treatment at some point. It is said that 80% of cats have similar dental issues to humans, the most common one being the build-up of plaque. Other dental issues include the build-up of tartar and gingivitis. The extraction of teeth is less common.

Many of the cats we rehome are identified as having mild gingivitis which the vet determines doesn't require immediate treatment.

Plaque = a sticky film that forms on the teeth

Tartar = hardened plaque which has to be removed by a vet

Gingivitis = a common, mild form of gum disease



How to care for your cat's teeth and mouth

- Provide a varied diet consisting of both soft and dry food. Plaque can build up if cats only eat soft food. Over time the plaque can turn into tartar which may result in gingivitis.
- Include special dental biscuits in your cat's diet. These scrape and clean their teeth
- Give your cat raw chicken necks and dental treats
- Oral hygiene should be included as part of your pet's ongoing health care and their teeth should be examined annually by a vet so that dental issues do not develop and lead to loss of teeth or other associated problems. Usually a regular scale & polish may be all that's needed to keep tartar under control.
- Depending how tolerant your cat is, you can try brushing their teeth. It's easier to train kittens from an early age to get used to this process. You should start slowly, let them taste the toothpaste first and gradually rub their teeth with a soft pet toothbrush. You should use special pet beef or chicken flavoured toothpaste. NEVER use human toothpaste as it's toxic for your cat
- Add a specialist additive to their water to control plaque, freshen breath, help treat gingivitis & promote healthy teeth & gums

How do I know my cat has a dental problem?

- They have smelly, bad breath
- They haven't eaten for a few days
- They have started drooling excessively
- They have started to paw at their mouth
- They are reluctant to eat dry food or lick up the food rather than chewing it
- Their gums are red, inflamed or bleeding
- They have yellowish brown tartar on their teeth