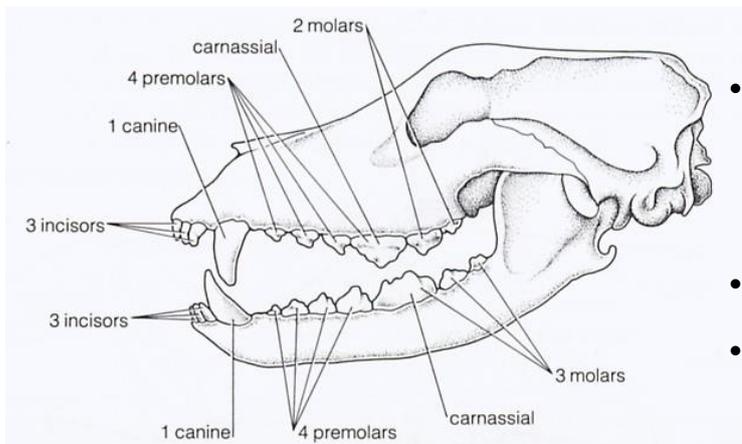


## Guide to Brushing your Pet's Teeth

- **Start to brush your pet's teeth as early in life as you can.** It is easiest to teach young animals to have their teeth brushed..... and prevention is better than cure<sup>1</sup>.
- Make sure your pet is **relaxed and comfortable** – sitting in your lap, or being cuddled by another person<sup>1</sup>.
- **Initial sessions should be brief and positive.** Don't push the matter if your pet is getting upset. It often takes several weeks for your pet to allow you to use a toothbrush and toothpaste on them without protest<sup>1</sup>. Limit each session to just a minute or two per day.
- **Start with your fingertips** - rub them along the teeth and gums. It may help to dip your finger into beef stock (dogs) or tuna water (cats), or use a dab of tasty pet toothpaste to make it more acceptable<sup>1</sup>.
- **Start with just a few teeth** - approach from the side and gradually increase the number of teeth as your pet gets used to it<sup>1</sup>.
- It may help to **start with the canine teeth** (the big pointy teeth) for easier acceptance by your pet.



- **Human toothpaste is NOT suitable for pets** - it contains fluoride and is not designed to be swallowed, and pets are not good at the 'rinse and spit' method<sup>1</sup>.
- When **introducing toothpaste**, put a small amount on your finger and allow your pet to taste it. Then press the paste down into the bristles of the toothbrush so your pet can't just lick it off<sup>1</sup>.
- When **using a toothbrush**, start by angling the brush towards the gum line and brush away from the gums (downwards for top teeth and upwards for bottom teeth). To expose the teeth for brushing, bridge your pet's nose and gently lift the lips.
- After mastering the canine teeth over a few days, slowly move along the teeth to the **premolars**, then the **molars** (back teeth) using a circular motion, before moving on to the incisors.
- To brush the front **incisor teeth**, hold your pet's mouth closed around the muzzle and gently lift the upper lip with your thumb and forefinger. Many dogs are sensitive in this area and may sneeze when having their incisor teeth brushed. Gently brush the front teeth up and down.
- **Offer a reward at the end of the procedure**, such as a walk, a game or a dental treat.
- Finally, have your pet's teeth examined regularly by your vet. **Tooth brushing slows down dental disease, but does not prevent it completely.** Humans who brush twice a day still need to have their teeth cleaned professionally, and so do our pets<sup>1</sup>.



- **At this early stage avoid the incisors** (small front teeth), as this is the most sensitive area in the mouth.
- Progress to using a **soft cloth** (such as a Chux wipe) or **small finger brush**, and finally onto a **very soft bristle brush** such as a baby tooth brush (which is needed to reach plaque hiding under the gum line)<sup>1</sup>.
- **Choose toothpaste designed for pets.** Aside from the more appealing flavour, pet toothpaste is much safer for regular use.

**For best results  
brush your pet's teeth  
every day**

**HAPPY BRUSHING!**

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