

80% of dogs have dental disease

Wouldn't it be great if all puppies were taught to have their teeth brushed daily, and prevented from this potentially painful condition?

But in reality, many of us weren't able to teach our dogs this skill when they were young.

So now our adult dogs shirk away from the thought of having something thrust in their mouths.

On top of this, if they already have dental disease, brushing will likely be painful for them.

What are we to do?

As part of your dog's annual check-up, the vet will examine your dog's teeth. Don't be afraid to ask them for advice.

Signs of oral pain can include:

- drooling
- loss of appetite or weight loss
- chewing only on one side
- excessive lip licking

Don't ignore these signs - get straight to your vet for investigations.

"For me, it's never 'just a walk'. Every outing is a fun adventure, and I take care to ensure that each dog feels safe, happy, and well-looked after.

I'm Heather, proud pet parent to Penny, my Jack Russell Terrier, six rescue cats, and a few cheeky rescue hens.

After working in both the corporate and charity worlds, I started up my own dog care business, combining my love of outdoors with my love of animals.

I soon realised that there is more to walking dogs than just clipping on a lead: every dog has unique needs and behaviours. So I soon began to study dog behaviour and now use my knowledge to ensure that each dog gets the very best experience with me.

Heather

I am committed to bringing best practice to my care through ongoing learning and ethical practices. I am qualified in Canine Behaviour, First Aid and Welfare. I am passionate about helping every dog to live their best life, through walks, training and equipment.

To find out more, call: 07706447261



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“It’s just doggy breath”

Oral health is much more important than just preventing smelly breath.

Plaque naturally forms on teeth during the day. Often, the dog’s immune system can’t get rid of this bacterial cocktail, so after 48 hours it hardens to tartar. This is much harder to remove and becomes a breeding zone for bacteria.

This bacteria can then enter the bloodstream via the gums and cause disease in other organs, such as the liver, kidney and heart.

If you notice your dog’s breath smell change, it is important to consult a vet. It could be an indicator of many things, including gingivitis, kidney disease and diabetes.



How to keep it clean

The best prevention is abrasion (rubbing) to remove the plaque within the first 48 hours.

Yes, this means daily brushing! You don’t have to use a toothbrush. A fabric plaster wrapped around your finger can also do the job.

Make sure to use dog-friendly toothpaste. Human toothpaste often contains xylitol, which is toxic to dogs. An enzymatic toothpaste contains chemicals which will also help to break down the plaque.

Dental chews can also provide the necessary abrasion. But watch out, as many are very high in calories, and not very healthy in their ingredients!

Top tip:

Powdered seaweed (*Ascophyllum nodosum*) can help reduce plaque build-up. So sprinkle some on their breakfast each morning.

What about diet?

Dogs that have a diet of dry food have a much lower risk of dental disease. This could be because of the rough surface, or the effect on the oral microbiome.

There is an ongoing debate on whether wet or dry food is better for your dog’s overall health.

The number one rule is always feed them a “Complete” diet (check the packet). Home cooked diets are best avoided unless you are following veterinary advice, including any supplementation required.



Ultrasonic Cleaning

Many groomers now offer ultra-sonic teeth cleaning (Emmi-Pet). This is a good addition to regular brushing, but it is not an alternative to a full veterinary dental treatment, which will treat any invisible disease below the gum-line. Always consult your vet before starting any dental treatment.

Looking for a dog walker with care you can trust? Send me a message on WhatsApp:

