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Animal Health

## HOW TO START BRUSHING YOUR PET'S TEETH

Brushing your pet's teeth is easy and does not have to take much time. The first step is to select a convenient time when both you and your pet are relaxed. For the first few days, pet or hold your pet as usual and gently stroke the outsides of your pet's cheeks with your fingers. Do this for one to two minutes. After each session reward your pet with a treat and lots of praise. The next step is to gradually move your finger into your pet's mouth and massage the gums. After a few days of this, place a small amount of pet toothpaste on your finger and let your pet sample the flavor. Pets usually like the taste and start to consider it a treat. Now it is time to progress using a toothbrush. Place a small amount of pet toothpaste on the brush, gently raise your pet's upper lip and place the brush against an upper tooth. Start with a circular motion, gently brushing only one or two teeth and the adjoining gum line. Each day gradually increase the number of teeth brushed. Build up to about 30 seconds of brushing per side. Don't forget to brush both the inside and outside of the teeth.

If at any stage your pet objects to the new treatment, then simply go back to the previous step for a few days before proceeding. After each brushing session, be sure to praise and reward your pet. Make it fun and your pet will learn to enjoy having its teeth brushed and you will take pleasure in the time spent bonding with your pet.

