

# Oral Health

The most important factor is the maintenance of a healthy oral environment. Raw bones are nature's toothbrush for our carnivorous pet animals. Dogs and cats who chew raw meaty bones at least four days a week have clean white teeth and healthy gums. This saves the need for an anaesthetic and intensive treatment to scale or remove teeth later in life. Cooked bone is not suitable as it is not digestible and can cause problems.

Any raw bone that is a suitable size for your animal to have a good chew at (ie get its teeth into!) is safe. Raw chicken necks or raw white bait fish for cats and toy breed dogs are usually about the right size, and raw chicken wings, raw lamb necks, or raw chicken frames are good for medium to large dogs. If they are not used to chewing bones, introduce them gradually over about a month.

You can use your general home remedy kit to help resolve acute oral conditions according to symptoms listed in the Oral Health Factsheet.

**Dental infection:** If the head is very hot and pain comes on suddenly give **Belladonna**. If the breath is very bad and there is excessive salivation **Mercurius**. If there is obvious pus **Hepar sulph** may hasten the process, followed by **Silica** to bring resolution.

**Dental surgery or trauma:** Give **Arnica** and **Hypericum** to help with the healing and a dose or two of **Phosphorus** to help clear the effects of anaesthetic.

**Gum disease:** **Mercurius** a few times a day if accompanied by a coated tongue, excessive saliva and foul breath. In the case of bad breath add **Carbo veg** daily to aid digestion.

**Puppies:** When your pup is teething and going through a whiny, restless stage give **Calc phos** to support rapid growth, slow teething, poor appetite and calcium metabolism in baby animals. Grumpy, spiteful animals who bite siblings and owners during teething need **Chamomilla**. They whine and squeal and are capricious, wanting to be picked up, put down and carried around.

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**Repetition of doses:** As a general rule you should reduce the doses of a remedy as it starts to act and not continue once the situation has resolved.

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