Dental Care For Cats

Just like many other creatures, cats require dental care. This doesn’t mean that you must take your cat to the veterinarian for a cleaning as often as you yourself head to the dentist’s office, but a plan for care can prevent a lot of problems later in life. Why is that? It is estimated that roughly 85% of housecats suffer from some form of dental condition, and most are serious enough to lead to extremely detrimental health problems and conditions too.

So, how do you care for a cat’s teeth? Interestingly enough, you care for feline teeth in the exact same way as human teeth, with brushing, flossing and rinsing. Naturally, it is going to be an extremely difficult process to acclimate a cat to regular dental care, but if you start while they are a kitten then it becomes part of their daily life. If, however, the cat is older when you welcome it into your home you are going to have to rely on some support from your veterinarian as well as some specialty products.

Let’s first consider the brushing – there are cat-sized toothbrushes made to serve for a daily or twice-weekly cleansing of the teeth and gums. Some look like miniature versions of human toothbrushes, but others fit more conveniently over an owner’s index finger.

It is important to understand that a cat of any age is going to resist someone forcing an uncomfortable object into their mouth, and this means that the object is going to have to be made appealing in some way. Veterinarians suggest using the oil or water from a can of tuna as the first introductory “taste” assigned to a toothbrush. After using this for a few cleaning treatments, the owner can begin to transition to one of the specially formulated cat toothpastes. These too have a “meaty” flavor that is intended to make the cat fond of the entire tooth brushing process.

If you are dealing with an older cat that is incredibly resistant to the process, it is still beneficial to give them the chance to just chew on their toothbrush each day. Coating it with the flavored paste is a great way to help them gnaw on the brush and to allow the bristles to help their gum tissue.

Flossing is achieved through the introduction of rope-style toys. Cats love to chew on this material, and it frequently works in the same way as dental floss – removing debris from between the teeth. There are also gels and rinses that can soothe irritated gums and help to eliminate some problems, though these tend to be available only through the veterinarian’s office.

The last part of any dental plan is to have a cat checked at least once each year, and to have cleanings done if problems have occurred. Gum disease and dental problems are the main cause of death in many cats, but treatment at any stage can often help provide comfort and a longer life.