



DANADA VETERINARY HOSPITAL, P.C.

## At-Home Dental Options

Dental/periodontal disease is a progressive condition that affects most dogs and cats over the age of three. It begins with gum inflammation and foul-smelling breath as bacteria get trapped below the gums. Once trapped, these bacteria damage the gums and the connective tissues that surround the teeth. The resulting damage leads to loose teeth, pain, difficulty chewing, infection, and the possibility of organ damage.

Professional dental cleaning (prophylaxis) under anesthesia is the only way to remove periodontal disease once it is present. However, just as with other health conditions, preventative steps can be taken to limit the development of dental disease.

The Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) currently endorses a wide variety of products for at-home use that are proven effective at slowing the progression of dental disease. When used appropriately, these products help reduce the number of anesthetic dentals your pet may need, as well as the cost of these procedures. The VOHC-endorsed products we currently offer for home dental care include:

**Tooth Brushes** – The gold standard in at home care. Brushing keeps the gum line clear of harmful plaque that can harden and trap bacteria below the surface. Brushing is most effective if performed at least four times per week. Edible toothpaste is not necessary but can make for a tasty treat to encourage your pet to accept brushing.

**Hill's T/D diet** – an oversized kibble diet designed to resist crumbling. When patients bite into the kibble, the teeth sink in removing plaque from the surface. T/D works best if fed as the primary source of a patient's diet.

**VeggieDent Fresh Chews** – a plant-based, edible, “z”-shaped chew that works the gumline as a patient chews it. VeggieDent chews have been shown to reduce tartar by 70% when given daily. They also have a bonus breath strip to help with mouth odor, and prebiotics to promote a healthy digestive system.

**MaxiGuard Oral Wipes** – Textured wipes that contain a compound called zinc ascorbate. This compound helps neutralize bad breath, calm gingival inflammation, and prevent plaque deposits along the teeth and gum line. Wipes are designed to be used once daily.

If you have any questions about these products, or your pet's dental health, please ask one of our doctors or staff members.

For additional options, visit [VOHC.org](http://VOHC.org).