

The Perils of Periodontal Disease

Just like you, your dog needs his teeth brushed every day.

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Recent innovations in professional treatment of periodontal disease include the availability of smaller scaling tips for ultrasonic cleaning, designed to clean deep gingival pockets and promote reattachment of the gum to the tooth. Bioadhesive patches containing the antimicrobial compound chlorhexidine can be applied within a dog's mouth to slowly release the medication where it's needed most.

Other advances remain under development. "A new technique for treating periodontal pockets is being introduced that will help veterinarians in general practice, because the technique will not require specialized training and can be completed under one anesthesia," said Jean Hawkins, DVM, a board-certified veterinary dentist based in Boise, Idaho.

Periodontal disease imperils your dog's health and quality of life. Take an active role in ensuring your dog receives the best preventive care at home and at the veterinary clinic. "Dogs eat, communicate, play and groom with their mouths," Dr. Rosenblad said, "so if we are concerned about their quality of life, we should be concerned about their oral health."

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