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# Pet Dental Care: Essential Tips for Healthy Teeth and Gums

Veröffentlicht January 29, 2026

# Dental Wellness is the key

Dental health is a crucial but often overlooked aspect of pet care. Just like humans, dogs and cats can develop dental problems that affect their overall health and wellbeing.

**Why Dental Care Matters**

Poor dental hygiene can lead to more than just bad breath. Dental disease in pets can cause:

- - Painful infections and tooth loss
- - Difficulty eating and weight loss
- - Bacteria entering the bloodstream, affecting heart, liver, and kidneys

- - Chronic discomfort that affects quality of life

**Signs of Dental Problems**
Watch for these warning signs that your pet may need dental attention:

- - Bad breath (halitosis)
- - Yellow or brown tartar buildup on teeth
- - Red, swollen, or bleeding gums
- - Difficulty chewing or dropping food
- - Pawing at the mouth
- - Excessive drooling
- - Reluctance to eat hard food
- - Loose or missing teeth

Home Dental Care Tips

Brushing: Daily brushing with pet-specific toothpaste is the gold standard. Start slowly and make it a positive experience with treats and praise.

Dental Chews and Toys: These can help reduce plaque buildup between brushings. Look for products with the VOHC (Veterinary Oral Health Council) seal.

Dental Diets: Some prescription diets are formulated to help clean teeth mechanically as your pet chews.

Water Additives: Dental water additives can help reduce bacteria in your pet's mouth.

Professional Dental Care

Even with good home care, most pets need professional dental cleaning periodically. During a professional cleaning, your veterinarian will:

- - Perform a thorough oral examination
- - Remove plaque and tartar above and below the gum line
- - Polish teeth to slow future buildup
- - Check for and address any dental problems
- - Take dental X-rays if needed to assess tooth roots

**When to Schedule a Dental Check-up**

We recommend annual dental examinations for all pets. However, schedule a visit sooner if you notice any signs of dental problems. Early intervention can prevent pain and save teeth.

Contact our clinic to schedule your pet's dental examination and discuss the best dental care plan for your furry friend.

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### Dog Allergies: Understanding Causes, Symptoms and Treatment

Just like humans, dogs can suffer from allergies that affect their quality of life. Understanding the causes, recognising the symptoms, and knowing the treatment options can help you keep your furry friend comfortable and healthy. What Causes Dog Allergies? Dogs can develop allergies to various environmental and dietary factors. The most common allergens include: Environmental Allergens: Pollen, dust mites, mould spores, and grass can trigger allergic reactions in dogs, especially during certain seasons. Food Allergens: Common food allergens include beef, chicken, dairy, wheat, and soy. Food allergies often develop over time with repeated exposure. Flea Allergies: Some dogs are hypersensitive to flea saliva, causing intense itching even from a single flea bite. Contact Allergens: Cleaning products, fabrics, or certain plants can cause skin reactions when they come into direct contact with your dog. Common Symptoms to Watch For Allergic reactions in dogs typically manifest through skin and digestive issues: Excessive scratching, licking, or biting at skin- Red, inflamed skin or hot spots- Recurring ear infections- Watery eyes and runny nose- Sneezing and coughing- Vomiting or diarrhoea (food allergies)- Hair loss or bald patchesTreatment Options Treatment depends on the type and severity of allergies. Your veterinarian may recommend: Avoidance: Identifying and removing allergens from your dog's environment or diet. Medications: Antihistamines, corticosteroids, or newer medications like Apoquel can provide relief from symptoms. Immunotherapy: Allergy shots or oral drops can help desensitise your dog to specific allergens over time. Topical Treatments: Medicated shampoos and sprays can soothe irritated skin. When to See a Vet If your dog shows persistent allergy symptoms, schedule a consultation with our veterinary team. Early diagnosis and treatment can prevent secondary infections and improve your pet's comfort. Our clinic offers comprehensive allergy testing and personalised treatment plans.

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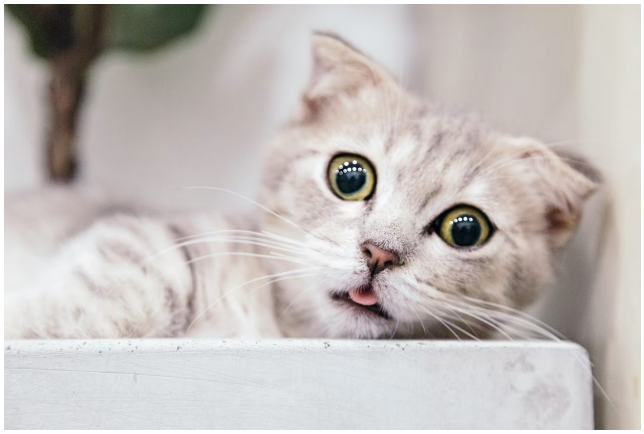

## Cat Urinary Problems: Warning Signs and Prevention Tips

Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD) is one of the most common health issues affecting cats. Understanding the warning signs can help you seek timely veterinary care and prevent serious complications. What is FLUTD? FLUTD is a term used to describe various conditions affecting the bladder and urethra of cats. These conditions can cause significant discomfort and, in severe cases, can be life-threatening, especially in male cats who may develop urinary blockages. Common Causes Several factors can contribute to urinary problems in cats: Urinary Stones: Mineral crystals can form in the bladder, causing irritation and blockages. Urinary Tract Infections: Bacterial infections can cause inflammation and discomfort. Feline Idiopathic Cystitis: Stress-related bladder inflammation is common in cats. Urethral Blockage: Male cats are at higher risk of developing life-threatening urinary blockages. Warning Signs to Watch For If your cat displays any of these symptoms, seek veterinary attention promptly: Straining to urinate or crying while urinating- Frequent trips to the litter box with little output- Blood in the urine- Urinating outside the litter box- Excessive licking of the genital area- Loss of appetite or lethargy- Vomiting (especially with urinary blockage)Prevention Tips Help protect your cat from urinary problems with these strategies: Hydration: Encourage water intake by providing fresh water daily and considering a cat water fountain. Diet: Feed a balanced, high-quality diet. Your vet may recommend specific urinary health formulas. Litter Box Hygiene: Keep litter boxes clean and provide one box per cat plus one extra. Stress Reduction: Minimise environmental stress through routine, enrichment, and safe spaces. Regular Check-ups: Annual veterinary examinations can detect early signs of urinary issues. When to Seek Emergency Care A complete urinary blockage is a medical emergency. If your cat, especially a male cat, is straining to urinate without producing urine, appears in pain, or becomes lethargic, seek immediate veterinary care. Our clinic provides emergency services for urgent urinary cases.

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## Puppy Vaccination Guide: Essential Tips for New Owners

Bringing home a new puppy is an exciting time, but it also comes with important responsibilities, including ensuring your puppy receives proper vaccinations. Vaccines protect your puppy from serious and potentially fatal diseases. Why Vaccinations Are Important Puppies are born with some immunity from their mother, but this protection fades over the first few months of life. Vaccinations help build your puppy's own immune system to fight off dangerous diseases. Core Vaccines for Puppies These vaccinations are considered essential for all puppies: Distemper: A highly contagious viral disease that affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous systems. Parvovirus: A severe and often fatal disease causing vomiting, bloody diarrhoea, and dehydration. Hepatitis (Adenovirus): Affects the liver and can cause serious illness. Rabies: A fatal viral disease that can be transmitted to humans. Required by law in many areas. Recommended Vaccination Schedule 6-8 Weeks: First combination vaccine (DHPP - Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza) 10-12 Weeks: Second DHPP booster, Leptospirosis (first dose) 14-16 Weeks: Third DHPP booster, Leptospirosis (second dose), Rabies vaccine 12-16 Months: Annual boosters begin Optional Vaccines Depending on your puppy's lifestyle and risk factors, your vet may recommend: Kennel Cough (Bordetella): Recommended for puppies attending daycare, boarding, or dog parks. Lyme Disease: For dogs in areas where tick-borne disease is common. What to Expect After Vaccination Most puppies experience no side effects. Some may have:Mild fever or lethargy for 24-48 hours- Slight swelling at the injection site- Reduced appetiteContact your vet if symptoms persist or worsen, or if you notice facial swelling, difficulty breathing, or severe lethargy. Before Full Vaccination Until your puppy completes their vaccination series (around 16 weeks), avoid:Dog parks and public areas frequented by other dogs- Contact with unvaccinated dogs- Areas where wildlife may have beenBook Your Puppy's Vaccinations Our veterinary team will create a personalised vaccination schedule based on your puppy's age, health, and lifestyle. Contact us to schedule your puppy's first wellness visit and vaccinations.

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## Senior Pet Care: Keeping Your Ageing Pet Happy and Healthy

As our beloved pets grow older, their needs change significantly. Senior dogs (typically 7+ years) and cats (typically 11+ years) require special attention to maintain their quality of life. Understanding these changes helps ensure your ageing companion stays comfortable and healthy. Signs of Ageing in Pets Common signs that your pet is entering their senior years include decreased activity and energy levels, changes in sleeping patterns, weight gain or loss, greying fur especially around the muzzle, reduced hearing or vision, stiffness or difficulty moving, and changes in appetite or water consumption. Health Considerations for Senior Pets Older pets are more susceptible to various health conditions. Arthritis and joint problems cause many senior pets to develop joint stiffness and pain. Dental disease from years of wear can affect eating and overall health. Organ function changes in the kidney, liver, and heart may require dietary adjustments. Some pets may also show cognitive changes similar to dementia in humans. Caring for Your Senior Pet Senior pets benefit from age-appropriate diets with adjusted protein levels and joint-supporting supplements. Continue gentle, regular exercise to maintain muscle tone and joint flexibility. Provide soft bedding, easy access to food and water, and ramps if needed for mobility. Schedule veterinary check-ups every 6 months to catch health issues early. At Pets Avenue Veterinary Clinic, we offer comprehensive senior pet wellness programmes to help your ageing companion enjoy their golden years in comfort and good health.

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